

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Heb 10:26

Heb 10:26 - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2006/9/4 6:30

Heb 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

I've read some of Wesley's notes and Matthew Henry's on this verse... but what I'm wondering is this...is someone decides I will not follow Christ..they willingly goes "back" to the world, with the idea that one day I can come back...

I know several people who are "saved" sometimes one month... then sin some...then they plan that next meeting I'm going to be a Christian again...

and so they keep on, this confuses me, if we have the knowledge of the truth, and then somehow people think they can have the cake and eat it also? can we come back later when we played enough with the world?

Christian

Re: Heb 10:26 - posted by Dougmore, on: 2006/9/4 10:03

Hi hmmhmm, This passage is confusing and I'm not even sure that I have it figured out but I will let you know what it says to me.

Say a non-believer goes to a meeting where they are convicted and they repent and confess Christ. That person's experience is true and they are saved.

The problem is most modern "so called" Christians say that because this person is saved their good to go, and don't need to walk with Christ. Nevertheless if that person does not keep Christ's commandments and pursue righteousness they have nothing to cleanse the new sins they are committing. Christ died for our sins. That is true, but He did not die so that we can sin willfully after we believe on Him. No, that person when they get to heaven, if they go, will be judged by God and punished. (Hebrews 10:30-31)

The person that continues to sin willfully is in great danger.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor . 3:17).

Those are some of my thoughts on the subject. In Christ, Doug

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/9/6 0:56

Great question, and one that too many are afraid of. I don't care if a brother believes one can lose his salvation or not. I personally don't believe a truly born-again, blood washed saint will fall away. If someone does, okay, let's just both keep on going for the Lord.

Now as to what this verse means, to me, it is saying that when a believer willfully sins, that Christ is not going to go back to the cross to cleanse those sins, neither is the blood of an animal going to be spilled, neither is God going to respect that person above others and do something out of His way to atone for willful sin.

Now I do not mean that sin that is committed by a believer is going to damn him after he is saved, but rather than that believer is going to face judgment fire just like the damned, but rather than roast in hell for eternity, the fire will just burn away the evil of his sin lived in the body, and bring forth the true works of Christ in his life (gold, silver, precious stones), if he has any.

Now, on the flipside, I think there are more false converts than true, meaning there are multitudes who profess Christ, get all the same teaching, get access to all the same gifts, but never repent, and never receive forgiveness, and never receive the Holy Ghost, but rather just taste the heavenly gift, like they would a sample. These seem to believe for a while, but trials and tribulation prove their kind, and they fall away, often being labeled a 'backslider that lost his faith,' when they

were never truly born-again in the first place.

Again, there are people who would agree and disagree with many of my points, so just search the Scriptures and be led by the Spirit into all truth.

Re: - posted by Jacob19, on: 2006/9/6 1:08

Well, we have to remember that this epistle is directed to the Jews. It is saying that the Jews who have their sins covered from a sacrifice, but sin after receiving the truth of Jesus, their sacrifice no longer is valid.

I do not think that this is directed toward Christians, although my friend told me he was reading Andrew Murray and he said something like "It is comforting to know this is written to the Jews and give it that explanation, but I don't know". That is a scary thing for someone like Andrew Murray to say!

But I do think that this interpretation is valid of it.

Re: - posted by Jacob19, on: 2006/9/6 1:11

Tozer does a whole sermon on this called (<http://64.34.176.235/sermons/SID2026.mp3>) Sin Willfully No Sacrifice. I hope I linked it right, but if not it is under the Hebrews section part 30 called that.

Re: Bereans - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/9/6 9:15

Quote:

-----I will let you know what it says to me.

Quote:

-----Now as to what this verse means, to me

Not to be unduly harsh here brothers, but this is a bit problematic, no? Would be far less concerned about what it means or says to me than to dig down and find out what the intent and meaning is...

Some more considerations;

Heb 10:26 -

For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth - If after we are converted and become true Christians we should apostatize, it would be impossible to be recovered again, for there would be no other sacrifice for sin; no way by which we could be saved. This passage, however, like *Heb_6:4-6, has given rise to much difference of opinion. But that the above is the correct interpretation, seems evident to me from the following considerations:

- (1) It is the natural and obvious interpretation, such as would occur probably to ninety-nine readers in a hundred, if there were no theory to support, and no fear that it would conflict with some other doctrine.
- (2) it accords with the scope of the Epistle, which is, to keep those whom the apostle addressed from returning again to the Jewish religion, under the trials to which they were subjected.
- (3) it is in accordance with the fair meaning of the language - the words "after that we have received the knowledge of the truth," referring more naturally to true conversion than to any other state of mind.
- (4) the sentiment would not be correct if it referred to any but real Christians. It would not be true that one who had been somewhat enlightened, and who then sinned "willfully," must look on fearfully to the judgment without a possibility of being saved. There are multitudes of cases where such persons are saved. They "willfully" resist the Holy Spirit; they strive against him; they for a long time refuse to yield, but they are brought again to reflection, and are led to give their hearts to God.
- (5) it is true, and always will be true, that if a sincere Christian should apostatize he could never be converted again; see the notes on Heb_6:4-6. The reasons are obvious. He would have tried the only plan of salvation, and it would have failed. He would have embraced the Saviour, and there would not have been efficacy enough in his blood to keep him, and t

here would be no more powerful Saviour and no more efficacious blood of atonement. He would have renounced the Holy Spirit, and would have shown that his influences were not effectual to keep him, and there would be no other agent of greater power to renew and save him after he had apostatized. For these reasons it seems clear to me that this passage refers to true Christians, and that the doctrine here taught is, that if such an one should apostatize, he must look forward only to the terrors of the judgment, and to final condemnation.

Whether this in fact ever occurs, is quite another question. In regard to that inquiry, see the notes on Heb_6:4-6. If this view be correct, we may add, that the passage should not be regarded as applying to what is commonly known as the "sin in against the Holy Spirit," or "the unpardonable sin." The word rendered "wilfully" - ὁμοθυμαδόν - occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, except in 1 Pe_5:2, where it is rendered "willingly" - ὁμοθυμαδόν - "taking the oversight thereof (of the church) not by constraint, but willingly." It properly means, "willingly, voluntarily, of our own accord," and applies to cases where no constraint is used. It is not to be construed here strictly, or metaphysically, for all sin is voluntary, or is committed willingly, but must refer to a deliberate act, where a man means to abandon his religion, and to turn away from God. If it were to be taken with metaphysical exactness, it would demonstrate that every Christian who ever does anything wrong, no matter how small, would be lost.

But this cannot, from the nature of the case, be the meaning. The apostle well knew that Christians do commit such sins (see the notes on Rom. 7), and his object here is not to set forth the danger of such sins, but to guard Christians against apostasy from their religion. In the Jewish Law, as is indeed the case everywhere, a distinction is made between sins of oversight, inadvertence, or ignorance, (Lev_4:2, Lev_4:13, Lev_4:22, Lev_4:27; Lev_5:15; Num_15:24, Num_15:27-29; compare Act_3:17; Act_17:30), and sins of presumption; sins that are deliberately and intentionally committed; see Exo_21:14; Num_15:30; Deu_17:12; Psal_19:13. The apostle here has reference, evidently, to such a distinction, and means to speak of a decided and deliberate purpose to break away from the restraints and obligations of the Christian religion.

There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins - Should a man do this, there is no sacrifice for sins which could save him. He would have rejected deliberately the only atonement made for sin, and there will be no other made. It is as if a man should reject the only medicine that could heal him, or push away the only boat that could save him when shipwrecked; see notes, Heb_6:6. The sacrifice made for sin by the Redeemer is never to be repeated, and if that is deliberately rejected, the soul must be lost.

**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, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. Heb 6:4-6

(This is a bit long, but may be of some help)

Heb 6:6 -

If they shall fall away - literally, ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι - "There is no if in the Greek in this place - ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι." Dr. John P. Wilson. It is not an affirmation that any had actually fallen away, or that in fact they would do it; but the statement is, that ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, "on the supposition that they had fallen away," it would be impossible to renew them again. It is the same as supposing a case which in fact might never occur: as if we should say, ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, "had a man fallen down a precipice it would be impossible to save him," or ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, "had the child fallen into the stream he would certainly have been drowned." But though this literally means, ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, yet the sense in the connection in which it stands is not improperly expressed by our common translation. The Syriac has given a version which is remarkable, not as a correct translation, but as showing what was the prevailing belief in the time in which it was made, (probably the first or second century), in regard to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, "For it is impossible that they who have been baptized, and who have tasted the gift which is from heaven, and have received the spirit of holiness, and have tasted the good word of God, and the power of the coming age, should again sin, so that they should be renewed again to repentance, and again crucify the Son of God and put him to ignominy."

The word rendered "fall away" means properly ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, "to fall near by anyone;" ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, "to fall in with or meet;" and thus to fall aside from, to swerve or deviate from; and here means undoubtedly to ὁμοθυμαδόν ὅτι ἔπεσαν ἅπασι, "apostatize from," and implies an entire renunciation of Christianity, or a going back to a state of Judaism, paganism, or sin. The Greek word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It is material to remark here that the apostle does not say that any true Christian ever had fallen away. He makes a statement of what would occur on the supposition that such a thing should happen - but a statement may be made of what would occur on the supposition that a certain thing should take place, and yet it be morally certain that the

e event never would happen. It would be easy to suppose what would happen if the ocean should overflow a continent, or if the sun should cease to rise, and still there be entire certainty that such an event never would occur.

To renew them again - Implying that they had been before renewed, or had been true Christians. The word “again” - [Heb_6:4](#); [1Cor_15:2](#); [2Cor_6:11](#); [2Cor_12:13](#); [2Cor_13:2](#); [2Cor_13:9](#); [2Cor_13:10](#); [2Cor_13:11](#); [2Cor_13:12](#); [2Cor_13:13](#); [2Cor_13:14](#); [2Cor_13:15](#); [2Cor_13:16](#); [2Cor_13:17](#); [2Cor_13:18](#); [2Cor_13:19](#); [2Cor_13:20](#); [2Cor_13:21](#); [2Cor_13:22](#); [2Cor_13:23](#); [2Cor_13:24](#); [2Cor_13:25](#); [2Cor_13:26](#); [2Cor_13:27](#); [2Cor_13:28](#); [2Cor_13:29](#); [2Cor_13:30](#); [2Cor_13:31](#); [2Cor_13:32](#); [2Cor_13:33](#); [2Cor_13:34](#); [2Cor_13:35](#); [2Cor_13:36](#); [2Cor_13:37](#); [2Cor_13:38](#); [2Cor_13:39](#); [2Cor_13:40](#); [2Cor_13:41](#); [2Cor_13:42](#); [2Cor_13:43](#); [2Cor_13:44](#); [2Cor_13:45](#); [2Cor_13:46](#); [2Cor_13:47](#); [2Cor_13:48](#); [2Cor_13:49](#); [2Cor_13:50](#); [2Cor_13:51](#); [2Cor_13:52](#); [2Cor_13:53](#); [2Cor_13:54](#); [2Cor_13:55](#); [2Cor_13:56](#); [2Cor_13:57](#); [2Cor_13:58](#); [2Cor_13:59](#); [2Cor_13:60](#); [2Cor_13:61](#); [2Cor_13:62](#); [2Cor_13:63](#); [2Cor_13:64](#); [2Cor_13:65](#); [2Cor_13:66](#); [2Cor_13:67](#); [2Cor_13:68](#); [2Cor_13:69](#); [2Cor_13:70](#); [2Cor_13:71](#); [2Cor_13:72](#); [2Cor_13:73](#); [2Cor_13:74](#); [2Cor_13:75](#); [2Cor_13:76](#); [2Cor_13:77](#); [2Cor_13:78](#); [2Cor_13:79](#); [2Cor_13:80](#); [2Cor_13:81](#); [2Cor_13:82](#); [2Cor_13:83](#); [2Cor_13:84](#); [2Cor_13:85](#); [2Cor_13:86](#); [2Cor_13:87](#); [2Cor_13:88](#); [2Cor_13:89](#); [2Cor_13:90](#); [2Cor_13:91](#); [2Cor_13:92](#); [2Cor_13:93](#); [2Cor_13:94](#); [2Cor_13:95](#); [2Cor_13:96](#); [2Cor_13:97](#); [2Cor_13:98](#); [2Cor_13:99](#); [2Cor_13:100](#); [2Cor_13:101](#); [2Cor_13:102](#); [2Cor_13:103](#); [2Cor_13:104](#); [2Cor_13:105](#); [2Cor_13:106](#); [2Cor_13:107](#); [2Cor_13:108](#); [2Cor_13:109](#); [2Cor_13:110](#); [2Cor_13:111](#); [2Cor_13:112](#); [2Cor_13:113](#); [2Cor_13:114](#); [2Cor_13:115](#); [2Cor_13:116](#); [2Cor_13:117](#); [2Cor_13:118](#); [2Cor_13:119](#); [2Cor_13:120](#); [2Cor_13:121](#); [2Cor_13:122](#); [2Cor_13:123](#); [2Cor_13:124](#); [2Cor_13:125](#); [2Cor_13:126](#); [2Cor_13:127](#); [2Cor_13:128](#); [2Cor_13:129](#); [2Cor_13:130](#); [2Cor_13:131](#); [2Cor_13:132](#); [2Cor_13:133](#); [2Cor_13:134](#); [2Cor_13:135](#); [2Cor_13:136](#); [2Cor_13:137](#); [2Cor_13:138](#); [2Cor_13:139](#); [2Cor_13:140](#); [2Cor_13:141](#); [2Cor_13:142](#); [2Cor_13:143](#); [2Cor_13:144](#); [2Cor_13:145](#); [2Cor_13:146](#); [2Cor_13:147](#); [2Cor_13:148](#); [2Cor_13:149](#); [2Cor_13:150](#); [2Cor_13:151](#); [2Cor_13:152](#); [2Cor_13:153](#); [2Cor_13:154](#); [2Cor_13:155](#); [2Cor_13:156](#); [2Cor_13:157](#); [2Cor_13:158](#); [2Cor_13:159](#); [2Cor_13:160](#); [2Cor_13:161](#); [2Cor_13:162](#); [2Cor_13:163](#); [2Cor_13:164](#); [2Cor_13:165](#); [2Cor_13:166](#); [2Cor_13:167](#); [2Cor_13:168](#); [2Cor_13:169](#); [2Cor_13:170](#); [2Cor_13:171](#); [2Cor_13:172](#); [2Cor_13:173](#); [2Cor_13:174](#); [2Cor_13:175](#); [2Cor_13:176](#); [2Cor_13:177](#); [2Cor_13:178](#); [2Cor_13:179](#); [2Cor_13:180](#); [2Cor_13:181](#); [2Cor_13:182](#); [2Cor_13:183](#); [2Cor_13:184](#); [2Cor_13:185](#); [2Cor_13:186](#); [2Cor_13:187](#); [2Cor_13:188](#); [2Cor_13:189](#); [2Cor_13:190](#); [2Cor_13:191](#); [2Cor_13:192](#); [2Cor_13:193](#); [2Cor_13:194](#); [2Cor_13:195](#); [2Cor_13:196](#); [2Cor_13:197](#); [2Cor_13:198](#); [2Cor_13:199](#); [2Cor_13:200](#); [2Cor_13:201](#); [2Cor_13:202](#); [2Cor_13:203](#); [2Cor_13:204](#); [2Cor_13:205](#); [2Cor_13:206](#); [2Cor_13:207](#); [2Cor_13:208](#); [2Cor_13:209](#); [2Cor_13:210](#); [2Cor_13:211](#); [2Cor_13:212](#); [2Cor_13:213](#); [2Cor_13:214](#); [2Cor_13:215](#); [2Cor_13:216](#); [2Cor_13:217](#); [2Cor_13:218](#); [2Cor_13:219](#); [2Cor_13:220](#); [2Cor_13:221](#); [2Cor_13:222](#); [2Cor_13:223](#); [2Cor_13:224](#); [2Cor_13:225](#); [2Cor_13:226](#); [2Cor_13:227](#); [2Cor_13:228](#); [2Cor_13:229](#); [2Cor_13:230](#); [2Cor_13:231](#); [2Cor_13:232](#); [2Cor_13:233](#); [2Cor_13:234](#); [2Cor_13:235](#); [2Cor_13:236](#); [2Cor_13:237](#); [2Cor_13:238](#); [2Cor_13:239](#); [2Cor_13:240](#); [2Cor_13:241](#); [2Cor_13:242](#); [2Cor_13:243](#); [2Cor_13:244](#); [2Cor_13:245](#); [2Cor_13:246](#); [2Cor_13:247](#); [2Cor_13:248](#); [2Cor_13:249](#); [2Cor_13:250](#); [2Cor_13:251](#); [2Cor_13:252](#); [2Cor_13:253](#); [2Cor_13:254](#); [2Cor_13:255](#); [2Cor_13:256](#); [2Cor_13:257](#); [2Cor_13:258](#); [2Cor_13:259](#); [2Cor_13:260](#); [2Cor_13:261](#); [2Cor_13:262](#); [2Cor_13:263](#); [2Cor](#)

Seeing - This word is not in the Greek, though the sense is expressed. The Greek literally is, "having again crucified to themselves the Son of God." The "reason" here given is, that the crime would be so great, and they would so effectually exclude themselves from the only plan of salvation, that they could not be saved. There is but one way of salvation. Having tried that, and then renounced it, how could they then be saved? The case is like that of a drowning man. If there was but one plank by which he could be saved, and he should get on that and then push it away and plunge into the deep, he must die. Or if there was but one rope by which the shore could be reached from a wreck, and he should cut that and cast it off, he must die. Or if a man were sick, and there was but one kind of medicine that could possibly restore him, and he should deliberately dash that away, he must die. So in religion. There is "but one" way of salvation. If a man deliberately rejects that, he must perish.

[illegible]

(1) the crime would be aggravated beyond that of those who rejected him and put him to death - for they knew not what they did; and,

(2) because it would be a rejection of the only possible plan of salvation after they had had experience of its power and known its efficacy.

The phrase “to themselves,” Tyndale readers, “as concerning themselves.” Others, “as far as in them lies,” or as far as they have ability to do. Others, “to their own heart.” Probably Grotius has suggested the true sense. “They do it for themselves. They make the act their own. It is as if they did it themselves; and they are to be regarded as having done the deed.” So we make the act of another our own when we authorize it beforehand, or approve of it after it is done.

And put him to an open shame - Make him a public example; or hold him up as worthy of death on the cross; see the same word explained in the notes on Mat_1:19, in the phrase "make her a public example." The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Their apostasy and rejection of the Saviour would be like holding him up publicly as deserving the infamy and ignominy of the cross. A great part of the crime attending the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, consisted in exhibiting him to the passing multitude as deserving the death of a malefactor. Of that sin they would partake who should reject him, for they would thus show that they regarded his religion as an imposture, and would in a public manner hold him up as worthy only of rejection and contempt. Such, it seems to me, is the fair meaning of this much-disputed passage.

e - a passage which would never have given so much perplexity if it had not been supposed that the obvious interpretation would interfere with some prevalent articles of theology. The passage "proves" that if true Christians should apostatize, it would be impossible to renew and save them. If then it should be asked whether I believe that any true Christian ever did, or ever will fall from grace, and wholly lose his religion, I would answer unhesitatingly, no! (compare the Joh_10:27-28 notes; Rom_8:38-39 notes; Gal_6:4 note.) If then it be asked what was the use of a warning like this, I answer:

(1) it would show the great sin of apostasy from God if it were to occur. It is proper to state the greatness of an act of sin, though it might never occur, in order to show how it would be regarded by God.

(2) such a statement might be one of the most effectual means of preserving from apostasy. To state that a fall from a precipice would cause certain death, would be one of the most certain means of preserving one from falling; to affirm that arsenic would be certainly fatal, is one of the most effectual means of preventing its being taken; to know that fire certainly destroys, is one of the most sure checks from the danger. Thousands have been preserved from going over the Falls of Niagara by knowing that there would be no possibility of escape; and so effectual has been this knowledge that it has preserved all from such a catastrophe, except the very few who have gone over by accident. So in religion. The knowledge that apostasy would be fatal, and there could be no hope of being of the danger than all the other means that could be used. If a man believed that it would be an easy matter to be restored again should he apostatize, he would feel little solicitude in regard to it; and it has occurred in fact, that they who suppose that this may occur, have manifested little of the care to walk in the paths of strict religion, which should have been evinced.

(3) it may be added, that the means used by God to preserve his people from apostasy, have been entirely effectual. There is no evidence that one has ever fallen away who was a true Christian, (compare Joh_10:27-28, and 1Jo_2:19); and to the end of the world it will be true that the means which he uses to keep his people from apostasy will not in a single instance fail.

(This view seems not opposed to the doctrine of the saint's perseverance. It professes indeed, to meet the objection usually raised from the passage, if not in a new mode, yet in a mode different from that commonly adopted by orthodox expositors. Admitting that true Christians are intended, it is asserted only, that if they should fall, their recovery would be impossible. It is not said that they ever have fallen or will fall. "The apostle in thus giving judgment on the case, if it should happen, does not declare that it actually does." And as to the use of supposing a case which never can occur, it is argued that means are constantly used to bring about what the decree or determination of God had before rendered certain. These exhortations are the means by which perseverance is secured.

Yet it may be doubted, whether there be anything in the passage to convince us, that the apostle has introduced an "impossible" case. He seems rather to speak of what "might" happen, of which there was "danger." If the reader incline to this view, he will apply the description to professors, and learn from it how far these may go, and yet fall short of the mark. But how would this suit the apostle's design? Well, if

"professors" may go "so far," how much is this fact suited to arouse all to vigilance and inquiry. We, notwithstanding our gifts and "apparent" graces, may not be "true" Christians, may, therefore, not be "secure," may fall away and sink, under the doom of him whom it is impossible to renew. And he must be a very exalted Christian indeed, who does not occasionally find need of inquiry, and examination of evidences. Certainly, the whole passage may be explained in perfect consistency with this application of it.

Men may be enlightened, that is, well acquainted with the doctrines and duties of the Christian faith; may have tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Spirit in his miraculous influences, which many in primitive times enjoyed, without any sanctifying virtue; may have tasted the good word of God, or experienced impressions of affection and joy under it, as in the case of the stony ground hearers; may have tasted the powers of the world to come, or been influenced by the doctrine of a future state, with its accompanying rewards and punishments; - and yet not be "true" Christians. "All these things, except miraculous gifts, often take place in the hearts and consciences of people in these days, who yet continue unregenerate. They have knowledge, convictions, fears, hope, joys, and seasons of apparent earnestness, and deep concern about eternal things; and they are endued with such gifts, as often make them acceptable and useful to others, but they are not truly "humbled;" they are not "spiritually minded;" religion is not their element and delight" - Scott.

It should be observed, moreover, that while there are many "infallible" marks of the true Christian, none of these are mentioned in this place. The persons described are not said to have been elected, to have been regenerated, to have believed, or to have been sanctified. The apostle writes very differently when describing the character and privileges of the saints, Rom_8:27, Rom_8:30. The succeeding context, too, is supposed to favor this opinion.

"They (the characters in question) are, in the following verses, compared to the ground on which the rain often falls, an

d beareth nothing but thorns and briars. But this is not so with true believers, for faith itself is an herb special to the enclosed garden of Christ. And the apostle afterward, discoursing of true belief, doth in many particulars distinguish them from such as may be apostates, which is supposed of the persons here intended. He ascribeth to them, in general, better things. and such as accompany salvation. He ascribes a work and labor of love, asserts their preservation, etc.” - Owen

Our author, however, fortifies himself against the objection in the first part of this quotation, by repeating and applying at Rom_8:7, his principle of exposition. “The design,” says he, “is to show, that if Christians should be come like the barren earth, they would be cast away and lost.”

Yet the attentive reader of this very ingenious exposition will observe, that the author has difficulty in carrying out his principles, and finds it necessary to introduce the “mere” professor ere he has done with the passage. “It is not supposed,” says he, commenting on the 8th verse, “that a true Christian will fall away and be lost, but we may remark, that there are many professed Christians who seem to be in danger of such ruin. Corrupt desires are as certainly seen in their lives, as thorns on a bad soil. Such are nigh unto cursing. Unsanctified, etc., there is nothing else which can be done for them, and they must be lost. What a thought!” Yet that the case of the professor in danger cannot very consistently be introduced by him, appears from the fact, that such ruin as is here described is suspended on a condition which never occurs. It happens “only” if the “Christian” should fall. According to the author, it is not here denounced “on any other supposition.” As then true Christians cannot fall, the ruin never can occur “in any case whatever.” From these premises we “dare not” draw the conclusion, that any class of professors will be given over to final impenitence.

As to what may be alleged concerning the “apparent” sense of the passage, or the sense which would strike “the mass of readers,” every one will judge according to the sense which himself thinks most obvious. Few perhaps would imagine that the apostle was introducing an impossible case. Nor does the “connection” stand much in the way of the application to professors. In addition to what has already been stated, let it be further observed, that although the appropriate exhortation to awakened, yet unconverted persons would be, “to become converted; not to warn them of the danger of falling away;” yet the apostle is writing to the Hebrews at large, is addressing a body of professing Christians, concerning whom he could have no infallible assurance that “all of them” were true Christians. Therefore, it was right that they should be warned in the way the apostle has adopted. The objection leaves out of sight the important fact that the “exhortations and warnings addressed to the saints in Scripture are addressed to mixed societies, in which there may be hypocrites as well as believers.”

Those who profess the faith, and associate with the church, are addressed without any decision regarding state. But the very existence of the warnings implies a fear that there may be some whose state is not safe. And “all,” therefore, have need to inquire whether this be their condition. How appropriate then such warnings. This consideration, too, will furnish an answer to what has been alleged by another celebrated transatlantic writer, namely, “that whatever may be true in the divine purposes as to the final salvation of all those who are once truly regenerated. and this doctrine I feel constrained to admit, yet nothing can be plainer, than that the sacred writers have every where addressed saints in the same manner as they would address those whom they considered as constantly exposed to fall away and to perish forever.” Lastly. The phraseology of the passage does not appear to remove it out of all possible application to “mere” professors.

It has already been briefly explained in consistency with such application. There is a difficulty, indeed, connected with the phrase, “again” to renew to repentance; implying, as is said, that they, to whom reference is made, had been renewed “before.” But what should hinder this being understood of “reinstating in former condition,” or in possession of former privilege; Bloomfield supposes, there may be an allusion to the non-reiteration of baptism, and Owen explains the phrase of bringing them again into a state of profession by a second renovation, and a second baptism, as a pledge thereof. The renewing he understands here “externally” of a solemn confession of faith and repentance, followed by baptism. This, says he, was their “renewal,” their renovation. It would seem then that there is nothing in the phrase to prevent its interpretation on the same principle that above has been applied to the passage generally.)

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