

Does Christianity have apostates? The word apostate means a person who renounces a religious or political belief or principle. Some synonyms are defector, deserter, traitor, backslider and turncoat. It is to renounce or disassociate oneself from a particular religion or certain religious belief. Someone who converts to another religion signifies that they turn away from their beliefs from something they once believed and turn to believing another. It may also be defying what was previously held to be true.

So in our script today, we see Christian and Hopeful coming upon a man named Turn-away who is from the Town of Apostasy. **Hebrews 6:4-8** says; “For it is **impossible** for those who **were once enlightened**, and have **tasted the heavenly gift**, and have become **partakers of the Holy Spirit**, and have **tasted the good word of God** and **the powers of the age to come**, **IF THEY FALL AWAY**, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.”

- **Enlightened** means that they were baptized and had intimate knowledge of Christ
- **Tasted the heavenly gift** means that they were privileged to the blessings of Christianity and ate and drank of that gift
- **Partakers of the Holy Spirit** means that the Holy Spirit was living in them and operated in miraculous spiritual gifts, they were born of the Spirit of God
- **Tasted the good word of God** means that they had been taught the Word where they congregated and may have been operating even in the prophetic
- **The powers of the age to come** means that they experienced God’s power and saw the demonstration of miracles

Here are some other Bible verses on apostasy or falling away:

- **II Peter 2:20-22** “For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them NOT to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ‘A dog returns to his own vomit,’ and, ‘a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.’”
- **I Timothy 4:1-2**; Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,”
- **Matthew 24:10**; “And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.”
- **Hebrews 10:26-29**; “For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he WAS sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?”
- **II Peter 3:17**; “You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;”
- **Hebrews 3:12**; “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.”
- **John 6:66**; “From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.”

The dark lane that Christian and Hopeful enter depicts limited perception for lack of light and show need of great caution for dubious characters hide here to try to deceive them in their walk with Jesus. It’s a place that describes Turn-away’s mindset and hence has fallen into deception without remedy. **Ephesians 4:14** says; “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.” This man, Turn-away, is being led away by seven devils who had him bound by cords of his own choosing of sin and guilt. **Matthew 12:43 – 45** says; “When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he

*finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.*” Turn-away had been a believer, that’s why the unclean spirit had gone out of him. Deliverance from a demon had taken place in his life. But when he chose to deny his faith (Turn-away), he in essence kicked Jesus out, his house or heart were left empty for a time until the same devil that had been cast out sees that Jesus is no longer king occupying his heart and goes to find seven more wicked demons to possess him...and thus his end is worse than his first. Pretty heavy isn’t it! **Proverbs 5:22** also says; “*His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and he is caught in the cords of his sin.*”

The sight of his man causes Christian and Hopeful to tremble greatly knowing that they need to be wary of not falling into the same demise. You see, people like Turn-away are lurking everywhere. I’ve met them. Apostates are very discreet, subtle, and secretive. **II Peter 2:1-3** says; “*But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who BOUGHT them (past tense), and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.*” [Jude 5-19](#), [Hebrews 2:1-4](#)

Is grace available for us to keep us from falling? Of course it is! It’s whether we choose grace to give us strength to overcome and resist or whether we deny it and fall prey to the adversary. You see, God made us with our own will. By our will we chose Him and by our will we can deny Him and turn from Him. We don’t become robots after becoming Christians, we continue to make choices. That’s why apostates and apostasy (falling away, denying, and renouncing the belief) are mentioned in the Bible. I’d like to share this link with you from [Matthew Henry’s Commentary about Hebrews 12:15-16](#) which says; “*looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of sold his birthright.*” The Israelites in the Old Testament are always a type and shadow of the new covenant that believers in Jesus Christ have, [I Corinthians 10:1-11](#) . Continue daily to follow Jesus; don’t think you can make it on your own. Paul says in **II Timothy 4:7**; “*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*”

