

## **EROSION OF OUR FAITH – HEBREWS 10:26-39**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. One of the grim realities of the life of a disciple is that one can fall away from the faith (**Heb. 2:1-4; 3:12-13; 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 12:25-29; 2 Pet. 2:20-22**).
2. But what causes someone who has known and practiced the truth to turn away from it?
3. How does one go from overcoming sin through Christ to being entangled in it again?
4. It usually doesn't happen overnight, but slowly and gradually, like erosion.
5. What can we learn from God's word that will help us to avoid the erosion of our faith?

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **I. ADMIT THAT OUR FAITH CAN FAIL**

- A. Even though we have already demonstrated that the Bible does speak of the danger of apostasy it bears repeating.
- B. There are just too many examples of people falling away and warnings not to fail to ignore this possibility.
  - i. Why would Jesus pray that Peter's faith not fail (**Luke 22:31-34**)?
  - ii. Why would Peter warn Christians about the activity of Satan (**1 Pet. 5:8**)?
  - iii. Why would Paul talk about those who had turned to become enemies of Christ (**Phil. 3:18**)?
  - iv. Why all the warning about the danger of false teachers and false doctrine?
  - v. Why should one worry about the love of the world (**1 John 2:15-17**)?
- C. The book of Hebrews makes one of the strongest statements in the New Testament about this.
- D. The repeated warnings leave little room to doubt that there is a real and present danger that one can fall away from Christ (**Heb. 6:1-8**).
  - i. These are people who have "once been enlightened."
  - ii. They have "tasted the heavenly gift" and "shared in the Holy Spirit."
  - iii. They have "tasted the goodness" of God's word and the "powers of the age to come."
- E. While God is working to save us, we must choose to cooperate with Him (**Phil. 2:12-13**).
- F. But if we refuse, instead of being certain and assured of our salvation, we can only be certain of our judgment (**Heb. 10:26-31**).
- G. We need to be honest with the text and accept that one can fall away.
- H. One can choose to stop trusting and obeying Jesus.
- I. If we are unwilling to admit that, then we are already at risk (**1 Cor. 10:12**).
- J. The first step in stopping the erosion of our faith is to acknowledge our faith can fail.

#### **II. RECOGNIZE THE DANGER SIGNS**

- A. But how does this happen to good, faithful brethren?
- B. How does a good and faithful brother or sister let their faith die?
- C. We often think about apostasy being the result of hearing and following false teachers and doctrines that lead us away from the Lord (**Jude 1:4; Acts 20:29-30**).
- D. Or we think about brethren who reject God's standard for holiness and begin to indulge in ungodly living.
- E. Or we think about those who got so worn down by the daily grind and struggles of life that they have fallen away (**Matt. 13:21-22**).
- F. The truth is that apostasy always begins in our hearts (**Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15:19**).

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- G. When we stop acknowledging God's existence and goodness in Jesus and being thankful for it then we can become susceptible to Satan's lies and to our own desires and be drawn away (**Heb. 11:6; cp. Gen. 3; Rom. 1:18-32**).
- H. This is why the Bible warns us about allowing our hearts to become hardened against God and ignoring His good purposes for us (**Heb. 3:12-15**).
- I. What are some warning signs that alert us to our own danger or help us see it in one another?
  - i. Are we finding ourselves rarely thinking about God's ultimate plan and purposes in Jesus (**Eph. 1:3-10; Matt. 25:31-46**)?
  - ii. Are we longing for sinful desires and perhaps indulging in them in secret and justifying our actions?
  - iii. Are we rarely engaging in private worship and devotion?
  - iv. Are we indifferent or apathetic about being present and participating when the church assembles (**Heb. 10:19-25**)?
  - v. Are we "mote hunting" or "fault finding" brethren so much that we feel justified in not being more active and zealous (**Gal. 5:15; Matt. 7:1-5**)?
  - vi. Are we not seeking the company of brethren but instead the company of those who are not of the faith (**1 Cor. 15:33; 5:6**)?
- J. While not exhaustive, these are just a few of the signs that should alert us that something is not right.
- K. When we see these in ourselves or in one another we need to act because the end of apostasy is death (**Jas. 1:14-15; Heb. 10:26-31**).

### **III. STOPPING EROSION IN ITS TRACKS**

- A. What do we do if we find ourselves on the path to apostasy?
- B. What do we do to help one another stop the erosion of our faith in its tracks?
- C. God in His grace shows us the way.
- D. Remember and reflect daily on the Gospel you have heard and believed and the salvation that God is offering in Jesus and rejoice and be thankful in it (**Heb. 2:1-4; John 20:30-31; Eph. 2:8**).
- E. Remember and reflect daily on the deceitfulness and horror of sin and abhor it and do not be hardened in your hearts (**Heb. 3:12-19; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 10:6-13**).
- F. Nourish and strengthen faith so that you may grow and not become stagnant or immature in your faith (**Heb. 5:11-14; 6:4-8; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Psa. 1:1-6**).
- G. Draw near to God in private, with your family, and with your brethren as often as possible to stir each other up to endure and be faithful (**Heb. 10:19-25, 26-31**).
- H. Determine to serve the Lord and one another, looking to the example of Jesus to strengthen you to do whatever is needed to save yourself and your brethren (**Heb. 12:1-17**).
- I. Don't refuse to trust and obey Jesus, remembering and reflecting on the hope that we have in Jesus (**Heb. 12:18-29**).

### **CONCLUSION**

1. If you are allowing your faith to be eroded, it's not too late to turn things around (**Heb. 10:26-39**).
2. Repent and turn back now; the brethren here are ready to pray for you and help you (**Act 8:22-24**).
3. Bring the thoughts of your heart back into captivity to Christ and in Him you can endure (**2 Cor. 10:5**).