

On Wed, February 13, 2008, Ben Witherington posted the following on his blog:

## **Christian Apostasy and Hebrews 6**

Certainly one of the most controversial issues in theological study of the NT is whether or not there are texts in the NT which speak of the fact that genuine Christians are capable of committing apostasy. There are numerous texts one could examine on this issue (e.g. 1 John 5; the Pastoral Epistles discussion about those who have defected and made shipwreck of their Christian faith; the discussion in Rev. 2-3 about Christians bailing out under pressure or persecution) but the locus classicus of such debates is Hebrews 6. The following is an excerpt from one of the chapters in my forthcoming NT theology and ethics volumes entitled *The Indelible Image*.<sup>1</sup>

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### **Apostasy's Possibility**

One of the issues that many commentators misunderstand, because of failure to read the rhetorical signals, is that our author to some degree is being ironic at the end of Hebrews 5 and the beginning of Hebrews 6, and engaging in a pre-emptive strike. By this I mean that we should not read this text as if it is a literal description of the present spiritual condition of the audience. Were it really true that most of the audience were all dullards or sluggards or laggards, then our author had no business going on to give them the “meat” in Hebrews 7-10. That would have been exceedingly inept.

And if it were true that various members of the audience had already committed apostasy, then on his own showing, this exhortation about apostasy would be a day late and a dollar short. No, our author is simply trying to shame an audience that is shook up into getting beyond the elementary and embracing the mature faith and its substance

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<sup>1</sup> This appears to be Ben's first (?) draft before the publisher did the final editing. The formatting of this blog was rough so I took the liberty to clean it up and make the minor changes that reflect the final draft found in his book. I also deleted several pages of material that came after his discussion of Hebrews 6.

rather than considering defecting under pressure. He is trying to head off any of them committing apostasy. The most one can say is that the audience is believed to be teetering on the brink of disaster, is weary and considering other options rather than going and growing forward in their Christian faith. Our author's tactic will be to unveil a more appealing spiritual path to follow which will be both intellectually stimulating and help them to maturity, while painting the course of action he sees as defection in as black a terms as possible: it would be apostasy, not merely a return to an earlier and simpler form of religion.

If we inquire as to why the subject of apostasy is addressed when the audience is assumed to be (at least in large measure) saved Christians, the answer is that our author has an "already and not yet" view of salvation; and indeed, as we have seen his emphasis is on final salvation, not conversion, though that is mentioned as well in what follows in Hebrews 6. Here perhaps it is worth mentioning how important sanctification, both the inward work of God and the human response thereto, is to final salvation in our author's view. Hebrews 12:14 puts it succinctly: without internal sanctification, no one shall see the Lord. F. F. Bruce was right in saying that sanctification involves both divine and human action is no optional extra in the Christian life but rather is something which involves its very essence, and without which, final salvation will not be obtained.<sup>2</sup> Sanctification and perseverance to the end, as it turns out, is not purely engineered either by divine fiat, or by the internal workings of the Holy Spirit, as if the believer were placed on a holy escalator to heaven from which he could never jump off. Thus, the subject of apostasy is addressed here not as a merely hypothetical possibility, but as a real danger for Christians in the audience.

We have arrived here at perhaps the most controverted part of the whole discourse, especially when it came to the medieval debate about post-baptismal sin and whether one could be restored after abandoning the Christian faith. Of course this text is actually about apostasy, a very specific grave sin, and not about sins in general that might be committed after baptism. One of the key factors in analyzing this section is realizing that indeed our

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<sup>2</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, rev. ed. (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), p. 364.

author, by some of the rhetoric here, is trying to put the “fear of God” into his audience in order to prevent defections, and so we cannot be sure how far one ought to press the specifics, since it is possible that some of this involves dramatic hyperbole. More clearly, our author sees his audience as those who have been Christians for a while who need to be moving on to more mature level of Christian teaching and reflection and living.

Instead, they had become stagnant or sluggish in their progress towards full maturity,<sup>3</sup> and so to some extent the rhetoric here serves as an intended stimulus so they will persevere and press on to the goal, and our author gives a passing reference to the fact that he himself believes and hopes for better things from them than apostasy. We must see a good deal of this section as a kind of honor challenge, meant to force the audience to wake up and be prepared to grapple with harder concepts about Jesus’ priesthood, but it is also a moral wake-up call reminding the audience that those who are not busily moving forward are instead treading water at best and falling back or defecting altogether at worst. The Christian life is not a static thing, not least because it is based in faith, which is either increasing or diminishing. Our author’s rhetorical strategy here can be characterized as stick and carrot, or heavy and light, or shock and reassurance, for we find confrontation followed by encouragement in Hebrews 5:11-14; 6:1-3 and in Hebrews 6:4-8; 6:9-12 (likewise, see Heb 10:26-31 and 10:32-39).

At Hebrews 5:11, at the outset of this exhortation, our author accuses the audience of being sluggish or dull in their hearing, or as we might put it, being hard of hearing. Notice the oral and aural character of the teaching in this setting. It is much the same as when Jesus repeatedly exhorted his audience, “Let those with two good ears, hear.” Our author nevertheless is going to plow ahead and give them more advancing teaching about Christ the heavenly high priest, beginning in the latter part of Hebrews 6. But here he starts with a reminder that the “word” has much to say to his audience, although that does not mean that it is either easy to explain or easy to understand, especially if one is spiritually deaf or if there are obstacles to one hearing clearly and grasping the implications of what has been

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3 And it is perfectly clear that *teleiotēta* in Hebrews 6:1 refers to maturity, not perfection or sinlessness or an experience of “perfection” in the Wesleyan sense. . . .

heard. We have heard all along that our audience had such hearing deficiencies (see Heb 2:1; 3:7-8, 15; 4:2, 7). Of course, the clarity of the Word is one thing, the acuteness of the hearer quite another. The word *nōthros* is found only here and at Hebrews 6:12 in the whole New Testament, and it is the notion which sets off this unit from what follows. Our author in fact may be thinking of the striking passage in Isaiah 50:4-5, where it says literally “the Lord God dug out my ear,” or as we might put it, “cleaned the wax out of my ear.” When this term is not used of a physical attribute, it refers to being dull-witted, timid, negligent (see Polybius, *Hist.* 3.63.7; 4.8.5; 4.60.2). Epictetus, for example, rebukes the sluggish who refuse to discipline themselves by using their reason (*Diatr.*\_1.7.30). To be sluggish in this case is to be slow to hear; it does not quite connote the idea of hardness of heart, though the author fears they may be headed in that direction, perhaps due to outside pressure.

Hebrews 5:12 makes the interesting remark that by now the audience ought themselves to be teachers rather than needing to be taught. Seneca complains in a similar way, “How long will you be a learner? From now on, be a teacher as well (*Epist.* 33.8-9). This suggests a situation where we are dealing with a congregation of persons who have been Christians for a considerable period of time, hence the exasperation of the author with them. It is time for them to grow up and get on with it. In this verse we see the use of the term *stoicheia*; in fact, we have the phrase *stoicheia tēs archēs*, which has caused a good deal of debate. The word *stoicheia* by itself means “rudiments,” or “parts” and can refer to a part of a word (a letter, a syllable—hence the alphabet) or a part of the universe (i.e. an element, an original component). This second possibility is its meaning in Wisdom 7:17; 19:18 (referring to elements or parts of the universe—earth, air, fire, water). There is much debate as to what *stoicheia tou kosmou* means in Galatians 4:3, 9; Colossians 2:8, 20, but probably it means “elementary teaching.”<sup>4</sup> This last meaning especially seems to suit Colossians 2:8. In any case, *stoicheia* linked with *archē* surely refers to first principles or elementary rudiments of teaching that they had already heard from the beginning of their Christian pilgrimage.

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<sup>4</sup> See Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, pp. 154-62.

There are parallels where clearly enough it refers to the elementary teaching or principles, not to some elemental spirits or beings (cf. Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.1; Quintilian *Inst.* 1.1.1). In this context the “elementary principles” are the beginnings of instruction in the art of persuasion, presumably some of the elements of the “progymnasmata” program. That our author is trying to shame his audience into learning more is clear enough from the fact that “milk” is for infants, and his audience is adults; or put another way, elementary education was for those between seven and fourteen. It was never flattering to suggest adults were acting like that age of children.

One may wish to ask about Hebrews 5:13, “What is the word of righteousness, or the teaching about righteousness?” One may presume that it has to do with the teaching about apostasy which he will dole out a significant dose of in a moment. However, in Greco-Roman settings instruction in righteousness referred to being trained in discerning the difference between good and evil (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 1.630-631). Hebrew 5:14 identifies Christian maturity with the capacity to distinguish moral good from moral evil, which in turn means being able to continue to pursue the course of righteous action and to avoid apostasy.

At Hebrews 6:1 we have the interesting verb *pherōmetha* which can be translated “let us move along,” but it can also mean “be carried along.” Both things are actually part of the process of maturing in Christ and moving toward the goal of moral and intellectual excellence. Our author does not want his audience to forget what they learned at the earlier stages—for example, repenting when necessary—for these things are foundational, but he wants them to move on to more advanced subjects, building on top of the original elementary learning. We have here the term *teleiotēs* which can be translated “maturity” but, unlike that English word, has the connotation of arriving at a goal or the completion of something that one was striving for, which is why it is sometimes translated “perfection/completion.” In this case, the author has in mind an intended eschatological goal and state. The “mature Christian is expected not only to ‘ingest’ the solid food but also

to follow Christ on the path to final perfection, whatever the cost.”<sup>5</sup> We should compare Hebrews 3:14; 6:11.

There is debate as to what we should make of the phrase “the word about the beginning of Christ.” This could, of course, refer to what our author was talking about in Hebrews 1:1-4, but that does not seem to suit this context. It could also refer to the basic moral teaching of Christ, which, according to the summary in Mark 1:15, was “Repent and believe the good news.” That comports rather nicely with the content of the rest of Hebrews 6:1. Our author has assumed before now in the discourse knowledge of the historical Jesus’ life on the part of the audience (Heb 5:7-8), and presumably this included some knowledge about his teachings. But is this “beginning” material to be seen as synonymous with “the elementary principles/teachings of the oracles of God” referred to in Hebrews 5:12?

All the terms that follow *didachēs* in Hebrews 6:2 are likely seen as the content of this teaching. Our author must stress to them that becoming a Christian back then involves not only activities but also believing certain things. There were early catechisms that talked about such matters, and we know that early on there was a sort of probationary period for the catechumens. As has been pointed out, there appears to be nothing particularly Christian about these matters. Any good Pharisee could have made up this list, but it is worth noting that Christianity, though it taught about many of the same subjects that the Pharisees taught, did not take the same view about them. Faith in God, for instance, meant faith in God through Christ, for the Christian. Resurrection occurred not just at the end of history, but already in Christ. Imposition of hands in early Judaism, which usually would have been for blessing, or later for ordination of rabbis, in Christianity was connected with receiving the Spirit and/or taking on a work of ministry.

Most commentators have assumed that the list in Hebrews 6:1-2 refers to the subject matter of elementary Christian teaching, and there can be little doubt that this is correct, for our author is stressing that his audience has heard such teaching before and

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<sup>5</sup> Attridge, *Hebrews*, p. 215.

needs to move on to the more advanced teaching. However, something should be said for the generic character of this list of paired opposites here, which could well have been said to be the substance of Jesus' own teaching.

**Table 4.2. Pairs of teaching from Hebrews 6:1-2**

Pair 1	Repentance from past dead works	faith toward God
Pair 2	instructions about baptisms	laying on of hands
Pair 3	resurrection of the dead	eternal judgment

There is nothing here that Jesus could not have commented on, especially if we take the reference to "baptisms" (plural) to refer either to ritual ablutions or more likely to John's baptism as opposed to that practiced by Jesus' own disciples (see Jn. 3:22; 4:1-2). The observation that all these topics could have arisen in synagogue teaching is accurate, and some of the audience may have heard of these things in that context first and may even been tending in a retrograde motion to focus on such things as they sought to move back under the umbrella of early Judaism. There is a certain progression in this list from repentance at the beginning of the Christian life to final judgment at the end and after the resurrection of the dead.<sup>6</sup>

But this is all the more reason to suggest that Jesus commented on and taught about these topics as well. Jesus, of course, engaged in laying on of hands, a practice that could have to do with blessing, healing, or even setting apart for some service or task, and certainly he spoke about coming judgment as well as the coming resurrection of the dead. What we could have here, then, is a shorthand of the elementary teaching of Jesus which was taken over into the elementary teaching of the church and called "the beginning of the word/teaching of Jesus." Scholars have puzzled over the reference to instructions about "baptisms" (plural) in Hebrews 6:2, but this conundrum is solved if the suggestion just made is accepted, especially if the author of this document is Apollos, who had to be instructed about the difference between Christian baptism and John's baptism (see Acts

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<sup>6</sup> Koester, *Hebrews*, p. 311.

18:24-26), a lesson then he applied in his own teaching thereafter, passing on his own “elementary education.” It could be objected to this view that if Christian baptism was in view, then *baptisma* would have been used here rather than *baptismos*; However, that objection not only overlooks not only the plural “baptisms” here but also that the Jewish Christian audience being addressed would know of various different sorts of ritual ablutions (cf. the use of *baptismos* in Mk 7:4; Heb 9:10). We may wish to contrast what we find in Hebrews 10:22, where clearly enough it is not the water ritual that cleanses the conscience but rather the internal application of grace by the Spirit resulting from the shed blood of Christ. Whether we see this elementary teaching as essentially Jewish or essentially Christian or both, it is something that our author wants the audience to move on beyond as they grow towards maturity. To make sense of Hebrews 6:4-8, we must realize from the start that if our author believed that any of the immediate audience had already committed irrevocable apostasy and were irretrievable, there would be no point in this warning, at least for those particular listeners, and Hebrews 6:9 makes clear that he is not responding to already extant and known cases of apostasy in the audience but rather is simply warning against it. However, one must take absolutely seriously the word that stands at the outset of Hebrews 6:4 like a sentinel at the door: *adynaton*, which means “impossible” or “completely unable, without power to accomplish the end in view.” The *Shepherd* of Hermas, perhaps dependent on this usage, seems to take the word to mean “impossible,” not just “incapable” (*Herm.* 103:6). Compare other places where our author uses this Greek word (or comparably a negative + a form of *dynamai*), and it quickly becomes apparent that by “impossible” he does not merely mean “improbable”:

“it is impossible that God would prove false” (Heb 6:18)

“impossible for gifts and sacrifices to perfect the conscience (Heb 9:9; cf. 10:1)

“it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Heb 10:4)

“it is impossible for the same sacrifices offered again to take away sin” (Heb 10:11)

“it is impossible to please God without faith” (Heb 11:6)

Commentators have debated about wherein lies the impossibility. Does the author mean that it becomes psychologically impossible for an apostate to repent? Is it the case that a person who has rejected the saving death of Jesus has repudiated the only basis upon which repentance can be extended? The problem with this view is that it does not say it is impossible to repent, but rather it is impossible to restore a person who commits apostasy. That leaves one to consider whether what is meant is human efforts to restore them or divine efforts. Craig Koester suggests it is the latter, not meaning that God does not have the power but rather that God would refuse to do so if someone “crucified Christ afresh.”<sup>7</sup> This may be correct, but we must bear in mind that our author is deliberately engaging in dramatic rhetorical statements for the purpose of waking up the audience. The function is not to comment on something that is impossible for God, and some commentators here recall Jesus’ remark that what is humanly impossible is not impossible for God, for all things are possible with God (Mk 10:27).

The description of the person who is impossible to restore is said to be one who has (1) once (*hapax*)<sup>8</sup> been enlightened; (2) has tasted of the heavenly gift; (3) has become a sharer of the Holy Spirit; and (4) has tasted the goodness of God’s word and the powers of the age to come. A more fulsome description of a Christian would be hard to find in the New Testament. In the first place, the term *phōtizō* (“enlighten”) is regularly used in the New Testament for those who have come out of darkness into the light and so have gone through the necessary conversion of the imagination and intellect (cf. Jn 1:9; Eph 1:18; 2 Tim 1.10; cf. 2 Cor 4:4-6; 1 Pet 2:9). In the second place, the verb *geuomai* (“taste”) means genuinely experience,” as we have already seen in Hebrews 2:9, which speaks of Christ experiencing death. In the third place, the term *metoxos* (“partaker, sharer”) has already been used in this discourse in relationship to the heavenly calling of Christians (Heb 3:1) and to Christians being sharers or partners with Christ. Having “shared in” the Holy Spirit is the hallmark of being a Christian, as Hebrews 2:4 stresses along with numerous other New

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 313.

<sup>8</sup> This word normally carried the connotation of something that occurs only once and thus is unique.

Testament witnesses, particularly Paul (see 1 Cor 12) and Luke (see e.g. Acts 2; 10). The phrase means to have taken the Spirit into one's own being.<sup>9</sup> And if any doubt remains that our author has in mind someone whose life has the divine presence and power of God, he goes on to add that this person has experienced the goodness of God's Word and also the eschatological power of the age to come. Paul, it will be remembered, referred to such experiences as the foretaste of glory divine that only Christians experienced (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:14). "In this and the three preceding participles, the writer withholds nothing in reminding the addressees of the abundance of God's investment in them. Upon them God has poured out more than they could ever have asked or imagined."<sup>10</sup>

There is some debate as to whether we ought to match up what our author says in Hebrews 6:4-6, concerning some of the initial things one has experienced in Christ, with the elementary elements mentioned in Hebrews 6:2. That is, enlightenment could refer to baptism; partaking of the Holy Spirit would correlate with the laying on of hands; tasting of the goodness of God's word and the power of the age to come would correlate with the teaching about resurrection of the dead, which in this case would have to indicate something like spiritual resurrection at the new birth, which is unlikely; and renewal unto repentance would correlate with the initial repentance of faith. There may be some force in this argument, but it should not be pressed too far.

David deSilva tries to cut the Gordian knot of this problematic text here by stressing that for the author of Hebrews salvation is a (purely) future and eschatological matter.<sup>11</sup> This, however, is not quite correct. Although the clear emphasis in Hebrews is on "final" or "eschatological salvation" (see Heb 1:14; 9:28) and although deSilva is quite right in his criticism of those who try to read into the discussion Ephesians 2:6, which speaks of initial

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<sup>9</sup> Koester, *Hebrews*, p. 314.

<sup>10</sup> Craddock, "Letter to the Hebrews," p. 75.

<sup>11</sup> See David deSilva, "Heb 6:4-8: A Socio-Rhetorical Investigation (Part 1)," *TynBul* 50 (1999): 33-57; "Heb 6:4-8: A Socio-Rhetorical Investigation (Part 2)," *TynBul* 50 (1999): 225-35; "Exchanging Favor for Wrath: Apostasy in Hebrews and Patron-Client Relations Relations," *JBL* 115 (1996): 105-9; Perseverance in Gratitude, pp. 221-22.

salvation through faith, as if that text refers to eternal security (rather, the subject there is conversion),<sup>12</sup> it is wrong to say that the author of Hebrews only thinks of salvation only as something future. At the very least, one must give the last clause of Hebrews 6:5 its due: it speaks of those who have already tasted the powers of the age to come. They are working retroactively. In other words, future salvation and its benefits have broken into the present, and one can presently begin to experience its benefits in the form of enlightenment, life in the Spirit, empowerment with the power of the eschatological age, and so forth. This is surely a description of a person who is saved and converted in the initial sense of the term *saved*. It is, then, a distinction without a difference to argue that our author agrees he is speaking about a Christian who has every advantage presently available through God's grace and characteristic of a Christian but then to insist that our author does not prefer to say they are saved. They have partaken of the heavenly gift; this surely is the same thing as saying they are saved at least in the sense that they have been genuinely converted and are Christians at present.<sup>13</sup>

And then our author says what seems almost unthinkable: in Hebrews 6:6 he uses the verb *parapiptō* (a verb found nowhere else in the New Testament) to speak of falling away, not in the sense of accidentally or carelessly falling down but in the sense of deliberately stepping into a black hole. In the LXX this verb is used to describe acting faithlessly or treacherously especially in regard to the covenant (Ezek 14:13; 20:27; Wis 6.9; 12.2; cf. 2 Chron 26.18). "The act of falling away is not so much against a dogma as against a person, at 3:12 against God, at 6:6 against the Son of God. The remainder of v. 6, crucifying again the Son of God and holding him up to ridicule, makes this abundantly clear. Apostasy, yes the sin of abandoning God, Christ, and the fellowship of believers (10.25)."<sup>14</sup> It is possible that our author means by "crucifying the Son to themselves" that they have cut

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12 See Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*.

13 "The 'heavenly gift' is best understood as a general image for the gracious bestowal of salvation, with all it entails—the Spirit, forgiveness, and sanctification" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, p. 170).

14 Craddock, "Letter to the Hebrews," p. 76.

themselves off from the Son, or they have killed off his presence in their lives. They have thereby ended their relationship with Christ. He is dead to them.

But the two clauses are related because “to make a public spectacle/paradigm” of someone was one of the functions of public crucifixion on public roads (see Quintilian, *Decl.* 274). Thus our author is suggesting that to commit apostasy is to publicly shame Jesus as well as snuff out one’s personal relationship with him. Hebrews 10:26-29 suggests that we should not try to alleviate the severity of the judgment spoken of here in regard to the apostate, for it says that for such a person there no longer remains a sacrifice for their sins but instead a terrifying prospect of judgment. Koester says that we should read the stern remarks here in the light of equally stern ones in the Old Testament that served as a warning against apostasy and tried to prevent it rather than being definitive statements about perdition (so Philo, *Rewards* 163). In other words, these words were intended to have a specific emotional effect, not to comment in the abstract about what is impossible.<sup>15</sup> We may also note that it appears that the wilderness wandering generation and their fate lie in the background here (see Heb 3:7-19), and the argument here is very similar to the one found in 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, where the fate of the wilderness generation is used to warn Corinthian Christians against assuming that apostasy was impossible for them since they have been converted and had various divine benefits and rituals.<sup>16</sup> As Luke Timothy Johnson stresses, however, it is not just rituals that our author says they are in danger of falling away from; it is from actual Christian experience itself: “The enormity of apostasy is measured by the greatness of the experience of God it abandons. That is why it is impossible ‘to renew to repentance’ people who have proven capable of turning away from their own most powerful and transforming experience.”<sup>17</sup> It is right to note how Hebrews 12:17 will use, as the model of the apostate, Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal

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<sup>15</sup> Koester, *Hebrews*, p. 320.

<sup>16</sup> Johnson, *Hebrews*, pp. 161-62.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163.

and “even though he sought it with tears, he was rejected, for he found no opportunity to repent.”

Our author chooses, then, to describe apostasy in horrific terms: to abandon one’s loyalty to Christ is the same as crucifying him all over again or standing and ridiculing and deriding him as he dies on the cross. In a culture of honor and shame this is intended to be shocking language about the most shameful behavior imaginable for one who has been so richly blessed by God in Christ. We must, of course, compare the similar language about defection that crops up throughout the discourse (cf. Heb 2:2: “turn away”; Heb 10:38-39: “shrinking back”; Heb 12:15: “falling short of God’s gift”; Heb 12:16 “selling one’s birthright”). We do well to take very seriously the word “impossible” in this text without suggesting that anything is totally impossible for a sovereign God. Our author does seem to believe that one can go too far, past the point of no return and of restoration. This text, then, cuts both ways, against a facile notion that forgiveness is always possible no matter how severe the sin in question, but equally against the “eternal security” sort of argument. Our author clearly emphasizes the future and eschatological dimension of the pilgrimage to being fully and completely saved, and short of that climax one is not viewed as eternally secure, for one is not yet securely in eternity. But at the same time, he is perfectly capable of talking about initial salvation in the terms we find here in Hebrews 6.18 As Howard Marshall succinctly puts it in regard to Christians committing apostasy: “The writer is dealing with a real, if remote, possibility.”<sup>19</sup>

What then is the alternative to apostasy? Clearly it is perseverance all the way to death or the eschatological finish line whichever comes first.

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18 The attempt by Frank Thielman and others to suggest that our author talks not about initial salvation but only final salvation simply does not do justice to a text such as Hebrews 6. Like Paul, our author has an “already and not yet” view of salvation, and he makes this clear throughout his discourse. But see F. Thielmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Press, 2005), pp. 606-07.

19 I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004), p. 620.