

Have You Heard? You Can Fall From Grace!  
By David R. Kenney

One of the dangers of creeds, confessions of faith, catechisms and other manmade religious documents is that these can actually contradict what the Scriptures plainly teach. Take for example the *Westminster Confession of Faith* which states that a Christian can never fall from the grace of God: "They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither usually nor finally fall away from the state of grace: but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved." Some think once they become saved, then there is no danger of becoming lost. But is this what the Bible teaches? The Bible does not teach a person cannot fall from grace, but warns us to the contrary.

One writer made a key distinction between possibility and probability of falling away: "Let us keep in mind that this is a question of possibility and not probability. The question is: Can a believer cease to be a faithful believer and suffer eternal punishment as a result? The question is not will he do so, but can he do so? The fact that travelers are warned that there is 'No Shoulder' along-side the road does not mean that they will run off into the ravine. The possibility exist, however that they could" (*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 222.) The Bible repeatedly warns us of the *possibility* of so sinning that we have fallen or departed from the grace of God. Notice these examples.

Warned against falling—"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12, NKJV.) Warned about carelessly drifting away—"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward" (Heb 2:1-2, NKJV.) Warned about a heart of unbelief—"Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" (Heb 3:12, NKJV.) Told the Old Testament Israelites' unfaithfulness is an example and warning—"Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience" (Heb 4:11, NKJV.) Warned about falling away—"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" (Heb 6:4-6, NKJV.) Warned about sinning willfully—"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" (Heb 10:26-27, NKJV.) Warned not to be led away—"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; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen" (2 Pet 3:17-18, NKJV.) The list could easily be expanded. In fact, Basil Overton estimates that there are nearly 2,500 passages contradicting "one cannot fall from grace" doctrine (*Seven Score Short Sermons*, pp. 112-115.)

Because of God's love and grace, we have the plan of salvation by which we can have our sins washed away and be redeemed. Provided we abide in God's Word, we have the hope of eternal salvation; however, failing to abide in God's Word certainly implies the opposite result—eternal damnation. Of course, the Bible does not just imply a person can fall from grace, it teaches one can fall from grace explicitly. Follow the Bible, not the creeds of men!

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This article appeared in the Wadsworth edition of *House to House*, Sep/Oct 2013.