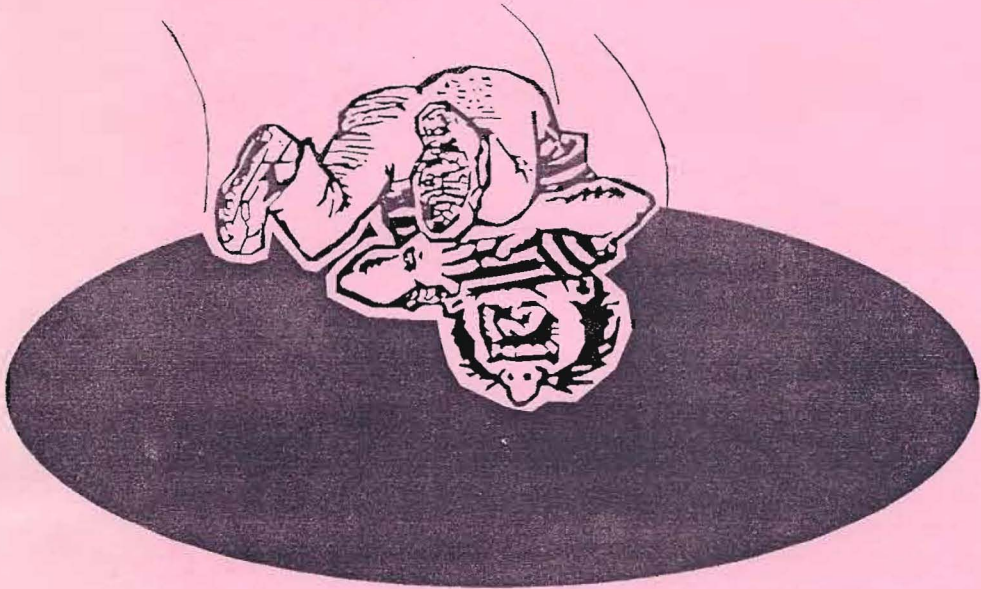


# A DEBATE ON APOSTASY



IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A CHRISTIAN  
TO FALL FROM  
GRACE?



# **A DEBATE ON APOSTASY**

**Between**

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**And**

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P.O. Box 176  
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**December, 1989**

## Ray Hawk

**R**ay Hawk was born in Kingman, Kansas on September 16, 1936. He graduated from Bethel High School near Shawnee, Oklahoma in 1954, finished his B.A. degree in May, 1958 at East Central State University in Ada, Oklahoma, and received his Masters in Religious Education from Harding Graduate School in Memphis, Tennessee in 1962.

Ray married Mary Nell Taylor of Coldwater, Mississippi in February, 1960. To this union were born two sons, Don and Mark.

Ray was a former Methodist preacher, having served in the Oklahoma Ardmore District until he was immersed on May 9, 1957 by Harvey Pearson. He has worked with churches of Christ in Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Florida and Paris, France.

Ray has written several paperback books to help preachers and teachers of the gospel. He has compiled a church program, ham program, and graphics to be used by churches with desktop publishing.



## Mike Morris

**M**ike Morris was born in Memphis, Tennessee on May 13, 1956. He graduated from high school at Harding Academy of Memphis. At Harding he was captain of the football team and a 3-year letterman in that sport. He received the American Legion School Award for a Senior Boy and the Best Supporting Actor Award there. Mike received a Bachelor of Science degree from Memphis State University and was a Magna Cum Laude graduate. He majored in Biology and minored in Chemistry. Mike served as president of the student union programming board and was elected to Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. He attended the University of Tennessee College of Medicine for two years before withdrawing from medical school. Mike received a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.



Mike has served on church staffs in Alabama, Texas, Arizona, and Tennessee. He now serves as pastor of First Baptist Church in Wickliffe, Kentucky.

Mike is married to the former Grace Evelyn Smith. Mike and Grace have two children, Andy and Paul.

Mike's article defending the inerrancy of the Bible was published in the July, 1988 edition of SBC Today, a national, autonomous publication of news and opinion for Southern Baptists. He has been active in the pro-life movement and has picketed an abortion clinic, marched around a hospital that performs abortions, and participated in blocking the doors of an abortion clinic as part of Operation Rescue.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## FIRST PROPOSITION

*“Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29 teach that a Christian may fall from the grace of God and be lost.”*

**Affirm:** Ray Hawk, evangelist, Campbell Street church of Christ, Jackson, TN. **Deny:** Mike Morris, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Wickliffe, KY.

First Affirmative.....	Page 1
First Negative.....	Page 2
Second Affirmative.....	Page 4
Second Negative.....	Page 5
Third Affirmative.....	Page 7
Third Negative.....	Page 8

## SECOND PROPOSITION

*“Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29 teach that a Christian may not fall from the grace of God and be lost.”*

**Affirm:** Mike Morris, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Wickliffe, KY. **Deny:** Ray Hawk, evangelist, Campbell Street church of Christ, Jackson, TN.

First Affirmative.....	Page 10
First Negative.....	Page 11
Second Affirmative.....	Page 13
Second Negative.....	Page 14
Third Affirmative.....	Page 16
Third Negative.....	Page 18

## QUESTIONS

Questions For Mike Morris.....	Page 20
Questions For Ray Hawk.....	Page 25

# Written Discussion On Apostasy

Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29 teach that a Christian may fall from the grace of God and be lost.

Affirm: Ray Hawk, minister, Campbell Street church of Christ, Jackson, TN. Deny: Mike Morris, pastor, First Baptist Church, Wickliffe, KY.

*“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” (Hebrews 6:4-6).*

*“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” (Hebrews 10:25-29).*

## First Affirmative Speech By Ray Hawk

1A1. The book of Hebrews is written to Christians. By Christian, I mean one who is born again (John 3:3,5). Hebrews 1:14 shows these readers were *“those who will inherit salvation.”* He refers to them as *“holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling”* (3:1,12). They were God’s house or family (3:6). They were partakers of Christ (3:14). They had been **enlightened**. They had **tasted** of the **heavenly gift**. They had been made **partakers** of the Holy Spirit. They had **tasted** the good word of God. They had **tasted** the powers of the age to come (6:4-6). These were Christians or born again ones.

1A2. The word **enlightened** is from *φωτίζω* and is found in Ephesians 1:18 where Paul refers to those who are Christians, just as the Hebrew writer does. It is used again in Hebrews 10:32 to refer to born again ones.

1A3. The word **tasted** is from *γενομαι*. Mike believes the word taste means to put it in your mouth and spit it out without swallowing it. Arndt-Gingrich’s Lexicon says it means to “taste, partake of, enjoy...a meal” (p.156). The word is used in Acts 20:11 to show they had eaten bread, not tasted it and spit it out. There is absolutely nothing in the word itself nor in the context of Hebrews 6:4-6 to indicate that they put it in their mouth, tasted of it and spat it out without swallowing it to get the full benefits. Mike wants us to believe they never became Christians because **taste** means they rejected it but never ate the bread of life nor drank the water of life (Q & A 3, p.20). Mike states, “only ‘eaters’ are actually saved.” Well, here were some **EATERS!** They had eaten the heavenly gift, the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come. How much more Christian (saved) can you get than that?

1A4. They had **tasted** or **eaten** of the heavenly gift. The NASV, which Mike uses, gives a footnote and shows that the heavenly gift is salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). Salvation, Mike! Mike, is a person a Christian if he has received, tasted, or eaten God’s gift? The word **gift** is *δωρεα* and is found 11 times in the New Testament. Once is in Hebrews 6:4. Mike, tell our readers what the other ten cases are. One of the places is Acts 2:38 - the **gift** of the Holy Ghost - which Mike thinks is Holy

Ghost baptism which saves you! These folks in Hebrews 6:4 were Christians because according to Mike's last proposition, this gift is Holy Ghost baptism **WHICH SAVES!**

**1A5. Partakers** of the Holy Ghost! The word **partaker** is from (*μετοχος*) and means "partners" (Luke 5:7) or partaker (Hebrews 3:14). Arndt-Gingrich's Lexicon states, "sharing or participating in...sharing in a heavenly calling...partner, companion" (p.516). They were partners, companions of the Holy Spirit! Mike thinks they never were saved. Does that sound like an unsaved person to you?

**1A6.** They tasted or ate the good word of God. Peter put it another way. "*Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation; for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord*" (I Peter 2:2,3 RSV). They were saved because they had received "*with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls*" (James 1:21). They had "*purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit*" (I Peter 1:22). In God's book, that's a saved person!

**1A7.** They tasted the powers of the world to come. **Powers** is from (*δυναμεις*) and is rendered miracles in Hebrews 2:4. These folks had the Holy Spirit and could perform miracles! Yet Mike thinks they weren't Christians!

**1A8.** These Christians **fell away**. Mike believes folks are born totally depraved (Q & A 6A, p.21). If one is totally depraved, he can get no farther from God than he is. It is impossible for a totally depraved person to fall from where he has never been. The only ones who could fall away would be those who gave up their fellowship or partnership with the Holy Spirit. The only one who could do that would be a Christian.

**1A9.** These folks cannot **renew** (*ανακαινιζω*) their repentance. Arndt-Gingrich show this words means "renew, restore" (p.55). This means they had repented once before, therefore they were saved (Acts 2:38). Mike believes a person gets one chance and when he rejects the gospel, he has blasphemed the Holy Spirit and God never gives him another opportunity (Q & A 6B, p.21). The reason they cannot be restored is because they keep on crucifying Jesus and putting him to an open shame (Hebrews 6:6). To be restored, they would need to repent and pray (Acts 8:13-24).

**1A10.** Hebrews 10:25-29 shows that once these had been in the "*our*" group, had once had a sacrifice for sins, had been **sanctified** by the **blood** of Christ, and insulted the one they had once been a **partner** with (NASV). Here were Christians who had fallen from grace and were lost. Verse 30 shows that **God's PEOPLE** are under consideration, not lost people who had never become Christians, as Mike believes.

**1A11.** All I must prove to establish my proposition is that the ones spoken of in these two passages were Christians. Mike admits they are now lost!

## First Negative Speech By Mike Morris

**1N1.** Obviously, God's sovereign plan included the possibility that both saved people and lost people would read the book of Hebrews. Many people attend churches today who only pretend to be Christians. The same situation existed in the first century.

**1N2.** The verb "*enlightened*" is also used in John 1:9 which describes Jesus as enlightening "*every man.*"

**1N3.** In my second edition of Arndt-Gingrich's Lexicon there are two definitions for the verb *γενομαι*. The first definition is "taste, partake of, enjoy." The second definition is "come to know something." Hebrews 6:4 is listed under the second definition. Certainly, many lost people "come to know" the gospel but reject it before they swallow it.

1N4. I think that one heavenly gift is salvation by grace through faith. In answer to his question I say that we become Christians by committing ourselves to Christ by swallowing the gift. Ray asked me to tell you where this particular Greek word for gift is found besides Hebrews 6:4. John 4:10, Acts 8:20, Acts 11:17, Romans 5:15, Romans 5:17, Acts 2:38, and Acts 10:45 describe salvation (the baptism of the Holy Spirit) as a gift. II Corinthians 9:15, Ephesians 3:7, and Ephesians 4:7 describe God's grace as a gift. There are two gifts; Romans 5:15,17 separate the gift of grace and the gift of salvation. Even Arminius believed that lost people could resist the Holy Spirit and spit out the grace they had received. Hebrews 6:4 deals with Holy Spirit conviction (grace), not Holy Spirit baptism.

1N5. Arndt-Gingrich's Lexicon lists two definitions for *μετοχος*. The first one is "sharing or participating in;" the second is "partner, companion." Hebrews 6:4 is listed under the first definition. A lost person can partake of, share in, and participate in the Holy Spirit by tasting Him without swallowing Him.

1N6. Christians also have tasted salvation, but they have swallowed it. Many lost people taste salvation and refuse to swallow it.

1N7. Tasting miracles is not the same as performing miracles. A blind man tasted Jesus' healing power but did not know whether or not Jesus was a sinner (John 9:25).

1N8. Totally depraved lost people have never before been under the conviction of the Holy Spirit; therefore, they can "fall away" from this tasting phase. People are born totally depraved because they were represented by Adam (federal headship) in the Garden of Eden. Babies are born with a willingness to sin but aren't held accountable because they haven't **actually** sinned in infancy.

1N9. Arndt-Gingrich's Lexicon has a number of definitions for the preposition *εις*, and it lists Hebrews 6:6 under the definition "to indicate the goal." The Holy Spirit puts us in the transition phase with the goal of our repenting in mind. Lost people who fall from this phase cannot be renewed "to the goal of" repentance. God grants us repentance (Acts 11:18, II Timothy 2:25) by placing lost people under conviction; that's the only time lost people can truly repent. Ray mentions Simon the magician as an example of a saved person who cannot be restored to repentance. If a person can't repent, isn't he lost? If a lost person can't be renewed to repentance, doesn't that mean he can't be saved? Acts 8:22 uses the words "if possible" when discussing Simon's future forgiveness. The next verse tells us he was a slave to sin. He doesn't sound like a Christian; it sounds like he was a pretender.

1N10. Hebrews 10:26 discusses people for whom Christ made a sacrifice. I John 2:2 states that Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (general atonement). His sacrifice was made for every person (I John 4:14, Hebrews 2:9). He made "*one sacrifice for sins for all time*" (Hebrews 10:12), and "*by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified*" (Hebrews 10:14). If Christ's sacrifice "**no longer remains,**" then a person truly has no hope for the future. Jesus would have to be literally crucified again for there to be another sacrifice for the person. Such a person really can expect nothing but judgment (Hebrews 10:27). The last phrase in Hebrews 10:30 comes from Deuteronomy 32:36 which is translated in the NASV as "*the Lord will vindicate His people.*" God will vindicate His people by repaying with vengeance those who have insulted the Spirit and committed willful sin. Adam and the angels were created with total free will; after he and some of the angels committed willful sin by rejecting God they were doomed. Adam did not get another chance to partake of the tree of life, and the demons could not become good angels again. **David warned Solomon** not to forsake God, or God would reject him "*forever*" (I Chronicles 28:9). In dealing with Jezebel, God "*gave her time to repent,*" but she would not and therefore suffered the consequences (Revelation 2:20-23). Jesus said, "*While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may*



become sons of light” (John 12:36). After Jesus ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit continued Christ’s work of enlightening people. If they reject Christ in this phase, they are hardened by God and are unable to believe in the future (John 10:39,40). Hebrews 10:29 does mention the word “sanctified.” I Corinthians 7:14 makes it clear that a lost person can be sanctified without becoming a Christian. A Baptist might also say that “he” refers to Christ; Christ was sanctified by the Father in John 10:36.

## Second Affirmative Speech By Ray Hawk

2A1. Mike’s 1A1 through 1A9 can be answered in one paragraph. (1) Mike needs to find where Ardent-Gingrich state that **taste** (*γενομαι*) means “put in the mouth, spit it out, and not swallow.” His objections to my arguments are fruitless until he does. (2) Mike says (a) put in your mouth + (b) swallow = (c) salvation, but not put in your mouth = condemnation. He can understand that grammatical construction without any difficulty, but he refuses to accept the identical construction in Mark 16:16. Satan has blinded him real good (II Corinthians 4:4). Does that mean Mike has blasphemed the Spirit? (3) Mike, faith only (easy believism, pretenders) would be to look at it on the plate and **not be willing** to taste it! You don’t believe the person has to taste. You think he is saved **WHEN HE IS WILLING TO TASTE**, not saved because he does taste!! Your definition of taste doesn’t fit your last proposition.

2A2. Jesus **tasted** death for every man (Hebrews 2:9). Did he stick out his tongue, lick it, and spit death out without swallowing it? That’s Mike definition of taste.

2A3. “Babies are born with a **willingness** to sin...” (John 40:1)? Mike says babies are “born spiritually dead” (Q & A 16, p.23). Yet Mike says “God doesn’t hold infants accountable” (Q & A 21, p.24). God doesn’t hold **spiritually dead** people **accountable** (Ephesians 2:1-9)? Baptist theology is contradictory and confusing. All people inherit the *consequences* of Adam’s sin, but not the *guilt* (Ezekiel 18:20; Matthew 18:3; 19:14). All are born with the ability to one day make choices unless death or mental illness strikes. Mike doesn’t believe that. He has the lost incapable of choice until the Spirit releases them. In Mike’s “**PHASE**” period, the person is not a slave of sin nor a slave of righteousness but in *spiritual limbo* (Q & A 12, p.23)! That is Baptist theology not Bible. Since the Spirit must **free** the individual from this **inability** to make choices, it becomes the fault of the Spirit if and when folks are not freed! Mike thinks Pharaoh was given his one shot, blasphemed the Spirit, lost his one shot, was hardened by God **against his will**, and never got another chance. If that is so, why was Pharaoh hardened over and over again? How many shots is that? Mike thinks God hardens a person’s heart **against his will** because he doesn’t accept him the first time. Mike says that this is because he blasphemed the Spirit. He assumes much but gives no solid proof.

2A4. The Greek word *eis* in Hebrews 6:6 does not negate the meaning of **renew** *ανακατασκευω*. Where does Hebrews 6:6; Acts 11:18; II Timothy 2:25 or any passage say a lost sinner only gets one shot at repentance? That may be good Baptist theology, but not Bible. It is impossible to renew (bring a Christian back to the repentance he once had) if he **WILLINGLY CONTINUES** in his rebellion. Once he **WILLINGLY STOPS** that defiance and repents, he can be forgiven. Judaism couldn’t, but Jesus’ blood would (Hebrews 10:1-4).

2A5. Mike tries saddling me with his doctrine. I didn’t say Simon the magician could “not be restored to repentance.” According to Mike, Simon never became a Christian because he blasphemed the Spirit, was hardened by God against his will, and could not nor wanted to repent after his one shot. Yet, Simon believed and was baptized (identical to what the Samaritans did, Acts 8:12). Were they Christians? An inspired Peter didn’t know Simon wasn’t a Christian. He told Simon to “*repent*” (Acts 8:22). Simon didn’t know he wasn’t a Christian because he asked Peter to “*Pray...for me*” (Acts 8:24).

Mike, your theology would make Peter say, "You can't repent of this wickedness nor pray to God, because it is impossible for the thought of your heart to be forgiven" (Acts 8:22). Baptist theology must rewrite the Bible (Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18,19).

2A6. Hebrews 10 indicates that as long as these "backsliders" remained in Judaism, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:26). Can the blood of animals remove sin (Hebrews 10:4)? If they left Judaism and returned, Christ's blood would take away sins (I John 1:7-10; James 5:19,20).

2A7. Mike's confusion lights up in his 1N10. Mike doesn't believe a **CHILD OF GOD** can fall and be lost. Adam is called "*the son of God*" (Luke 3:38). Mike gives up the debate in 1N10 by admitting that Adam, **THE SON OF GOD**, fell, blasphemed the Spirit, and is not given another chance! *Thank you Mike!* Mike's confusion continues when he says, "**David warned Solomon** not to forsake God." Mike, don't you argue that Solomon, as a child of God, could not forsake God and be rejected? He thinks we will not see his inconsistencies! We see it Mike, loud and clear.

2A8. "*The blood of the covenant that sanctified him*" (Hebrews 10:29 NIV). The blood set the sinner apart. Apart from what to where (Colossians 1:13,14)? What does the blood do (Acts 20:28)? Look at Hebrews 9:12,14,22; 10:19. What does it mean Mike? Your soul depends upon your correct answer! Mike thinks the "*he*" in verse 29 is Christ! If so, Mike makes Jesus a blasphemer of the Spirit (Q & A 2, p.20). Another Baptist dilemma.

2A9. These Hebrew 6 and 10 Christians were like those Jesus spoke of in John 15:1-7. Jesus said they "*abide in*" him (John 15:2,6). Yet they do not bear fruit (backslide) (v.2). Those non-bearing branches will be taken away and burned (V.6). Even Mike admits that they "don't want to abide in Him" (Q & A 6B, p.21). Branches IN Christ that don't want to abide in him! Thank you Mike.

2A10. In Revelation 22:19 some took away from the book. These were Christians. The reward for taking away from the book was to have their names removed from the book of life. Fallen from grace Christians! Fallen (backsliding) Christians are being discussed in Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29. A **Christian may lose his salvation.**

## Second Negative Speech By Mike Morris

2N1. In 2A1, p.4, Ray states, "You don't believe the person has to taste." Actually, I do believe the person has to taste. A lost person doesn't decide when he will taste salvation; God is the one who calls us (Romans 8:30), draws us (John 6:44,65), and frees us (Romans 6:18). I think a person is saved when he is willing to swallow, not "when he is willing to taste" (2A1, p.4).

2N2. Yes, in one sense Jesus tasted death and then spat it out of his mouth. Remember that He rose from the grave; therefore, He rejected the death He tasted. In another sense Jesus tasted the pain of death while He was still alive on the cross; He could have rejected actual death by coming down off the cross, but He chose to accept it.

2N3. Ray is absolutely correct in saying that Pharaoh was "hardened over and over again." Hardening, like salvation, is a process as well as an event. At the conversion event we are crucified with Christ. However, the crucifixion doesn't stop at the point of justification; it continues in the process of spiritual growth. We are crucified daily (Luke 9:23). A lost person is condemned at the point of rejection (John 3:18). God foreknew that this would happen; such lost people were appointed for doom from the foundation of the world (I Peter 2:8). God continues the hardening process by giving "*them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper*" (Romans 1:28). Pharaoh played a part in the hardening just as we play a part in salvation (Exodus 8:15,32). "*A man who*

*hardens his neck after much reproof will suddenly be broken beyond remedy*" (Proverbs 29:1, emphasis mine, MM).

2N4. Ray is adding words to Hebrews 6:6 in 2A4, p.4. The verse says nothing about what happens if they "willingly continue" or "willingly stop." The Holy Spirit doesn't renew us on the basis of our works (Titus 3:5). Ray is saying that people fall away because they can't be renewed to repentance. Actually, they can't be renewed to repentance because they've fallen away. The Greek word for "fallen away" is *παρὰπεσοντας*; it's an aorist participle. According to Drumright's *An Introduction to New Testament Greek*, "the aorist participle has punctiliar action," and "its time will be antecedent to the time of the leading verb" (p.112). Thus, it is impossible to renew them **after** they have fallen away from this phase. Like Esau in Hebrews 12:16,17 they have sold their birthrights and later find "*no place for repentance.*"

2N5. Peter did know that Simon Magus was not a Christian; he called him a slave to sin. Simon's request for prayer wasn't unusual; lost people frequently ask me to pray for them.

2N6. In response to 2A6, p.5 I say that there has been only one sacrifice for our sins (Hebrews 10:10,12,14). If that sacrifice no longer remains for a person (Hebrews 10:26), then he has no hope. He has trampled Jesus under foot and made Him a liar (I John 1:10). James 5:19,20 simply tells us that the souls of backsliding Christians can experience death (I Corinthians 11:30), but of course their spirits are still safe (I Corinthians 5:5).

2N7. The genealogy in Luke 3:23-38 simply tells who begot whom. Adam is called "*the son of God*" because he was the direct creation of God. Angels are also called "*sons of God*" (Genesis 6:2; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7) because they are direct creations of God. Adam and the angels were created with total free will; Adam and some of the angels fell from that state when they rejected God (committing wilful sin). God had told Adam that he could die spiritually (Genesis 2:17); Adam was not allowed a second shot at the tree of life (Genesis 3:22-24). Judgment came to Adam because of his wilful sin, and he was condemned (Romans 5:16). I cited Solomon as an example of one who rejects a conditional covenant offer. Solomon was allowed to taste kingship. God said that Solomon's kingdom would be established forever "*if*" he was obedient (I Chronicles 28:7; I Kings 2:1-4). Solomon was given wisdom (enlightened), but he was never completely obedient, even at the beginning of his reign (I Kings 3:3). Later the kingdom was torn from him (I Kings 11:11).

2N8. Ray seems to believe in limited atonement, that Christ's blood only applies to the elect (a strict Calvinist position). I believe that Christ died for all people. The blood of Christ was shed for all sinners (I John 2:2; Romans 5:8). Hebrews 9:14 tells us His blood frees our conscience from dead works; therefore, we're certainly not saved by such works. Hebrews 10:19 makes it clear that we can only approach God through the blood of Jesus; our fleshly works are like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6).

2N9. The Hebrews 6 and 10 people were like those in the phase Jesus spoke of in John 15:1-7. In one sense "*no one who abides in Him sins*" (I John 3:6) because Christ's blood obliterates seeming sins of Christians. The Christian (in the same sense) "*cannot sin, because he is born of God*" (I John 3:9). "*God keeps him*" (I John 5:18). When a lost person tastes Jesus he must commit himself to abide in Him. One who decides not to abide in Jesus in the grace period is condemned to hell (John 15:6). They lose their place in the tree of life (another picture of the vine) (Revelation 22:19).

2N10. Every human being has a part in the tree of life until he loses it. Christ reconciled the "*world to Himself*" (II Corinthians 5:19) and "*gave Himself as a ransom for all*" (I Timothy 2:6, emphasis mine, MM).

## Third Affirmative Speech By Ray Hawk

3A1. Mike **DID NOT** give a statement from Arndt-Gingrich to prove that taste (*γενομαι*) means “put in the mouth, spit it out, and not swallow” (2N1, p.5). He refused to notice the parallel between his arguments and Mark 16:16b (Cf.2A1, p.4). Mike’s doctrine teaches faith + a willingness to taste = salvation. Those in Hebrews 6:4-6 were Christians when they tasted according to his definition of salvation. He declares “If a lost person tries to add works to the formula, he falls from grace” (Q & A 6, p.21). Tasting would be a work in Mike’s vocabulary. To taste would be equal to water baptism which Mike rejects. He has them saved and lost at the same time. A Baptist dilemma.

3A2. Mike debates himself in 2N2. p.5. Jesus tasted death (actually died, Hebrews 2:9), he didn’t spit it out. The Bible does not fit Mike’s definition of taste. Mike contradicts himself and God’s word to save his Calvinistic doctrine.

3A3. In 1N8, p.3 he said “Babies are born with a willingness to sin...” I put (John 40:1) in my 2A3, p.4. Why? Because you can find John 40:1 quicker than you can locate his doctrine. In Mike’s PHASE PERIOD, the lost is not a slave of sin nor a slave of righteousness, but in **SPIRITUAL LIMBO** (Q & A 12, p.23). That’s Baptist doctrine, not Bible. Mike admits that God continued to give Pharaoh opportunity after opportunity to repent, something which Mike says is impossible (“It’s impossible for them to ever repent again,” Q & A 6B, p.21) - but there it is in the Bible and Mike admits it! Mike says salvation is a process. He contradicts himself. He says a Christian can backslide and not bear fruit which means he can refuse to crucify himself daily (Q & A 14, p.23). Another Baptist dilemma.

3A4. Mike, the expression “*falling away*” (*παραπεσοντας*) may be an aorist participle, but there is absolutely nothing in Greek grammar which says they could not stop crucifying Jesus and stop putting him to an open shame. Nothing you introduced says a lost sinner only gets one shot at repentance. Mike, these folks fell away when they returned to Judaism with its sacrifices. Those sacrifices (“*there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*”) could not remove sins (Hebrews 10:4). They needed to repent and return to Christ. If they did not, they would remain under a system where their repentance and animal sacrifices would not remit sins.

3A5. Mike ignored my question on the Samaritans (2N5, p.6). According to Mike’s theology, Simon blasphemed the Spirit. He says Peter didn’t know he was a Christian. The Spirit inspired Peter to tell Simon to “*repent...and pray*” (Acts 8:22), something Mike says could not be done by the Spirit for one who was in Simon’s condition (“People today may hear the gospel many times, but the Spirit only brings us under conviction once,” Q & A 6B, p.21).

3A6. Mike read Hebrews 10:26 without Baptist glasses (Cf.3A4, p.7). Mike thinks the backsliding Christian can lose his soul in hell but his spirit will go to heaven (2N6, p.6). A strange doctrine indeed. A half devil/half saint.

3A7. Mike admits Adam, a son of God, lost his soul (2N7, p.6). Mike affirms my side of the issue. He admits that Solomon could be lost (I Chronicles 28:9). Solomon, David, and other Jews are called by God “*my son*” (Hosea 11:1). Many fell away and were lost (I Corinthians 10:1-5). Jezebel was under that covenant and Mike admits she fell (Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 10:11).

3A8. Mike ignores my questions in 2A8, p.5. He doesn’t know what the “*dead works*” in Hebrews 9:14 are. The context shows they are the works of the law of Moses, not water baptism (Hebrews 9:12,13). Those in Hebrews 10:29 had been set aside from the “*power of darkness*” and translated into “*the kingdom of his dear Son*” by the blood of Christ (Colossians 1:13,14). They were Christians.

3A9. Mike admits “The Hebrews 6 and 10 people were like those....in John 15:1-7.” The folks in John 15 were “IN” Christ (John 15:2). Mike admits it (Q & A 6B, p.21, and 2N9, p.6). If a person is IN Christ, he is a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17). Mike admits these folks who were IN Christ are taken away (fall away) and will be burned (John 15:2,6). Mike makes I John 3:6,9; 5:18 contradict 1:7-10! Another Baptist dilemma.

3A10. Mike has the saved losing their salvation by losing their part in the tree of life (2N10, p.6)! Mike affirms my proposition yet he is supposed to be negating it! Revelation 22:19 shows adults Christians who are having their names removed from the book of life because of their action of taking “away from the words of the book of this prophecy.” Fallen from grace Christians! A Christian can lose his salvation. Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29 stands as a testimony of that fact.

3A11. Mike says denying Christ is the blasphemy against the Spirit (“Such lost people who refuse to commit themselves to Christ have committed the unpardonable sin and have insulted (blasphemed) the Holy Spirit” Q & A 6B, p.21). Yet Peter denied Jesus THREE TIMES! According to Mike’s doctrine, Peter was an apostle but he never was saved because he blasphemed the Spirit (Q & A 6B, p.21)! Another Baptist dilemma.

### Third Negative Speech By Mike Morris

3N1. I think I gave a satisfactory explanation for “taste” in 1N3, p.2. It’s obvious that a person can taste something and then spit it out of his mouth. Ray’s “eating” analogy involves swallowing salvation, partially digesting it, regurgitating it, and then swallowing it again. Ray believes that we’re actually saved until we’re lost again. Hebrews 7:25 tells us that Jesus “is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him.” The word *παντελης* is used twice in this verse, which is listed in Ardent-Gingrich’s Lexicon under the definition “forever, for all time.” I disagree with the equation Ray uses in 3A1 to analyze my doctrinal position. My position is that faith is equivalent to a willingness to swallow. Swallowing isn’t a physical work in the spiritual sense of this passage; it’s a response of the will.

3N2. I didn’t debate myself: I listed two senses in which Jesus tasted death.

3N3. Let’s try to quickly locate in the Bible the doctrine which says that babies are born with a willingness to sin. “The wicked are estranged from the womb; these who speak lies go astray from birth” (Psalm 58:3). “Both Jews and Greeks are all under sin...There is none righteous, not even one” (Romans 3:9,10). “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me” (Psalm 51:5). “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child” (Proverbs 22:15). “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts” (Mark 7:21). “A child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother” (Proverbs 29:15). “We too all...were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest” (Ephesians 2:3). “Lay aside the old self” (Ephesians 4:22). “The first man is from the earth, earthy...we have borne the image of the earthy” (I Corinthians 15:47-49). “In Adam all die” (I Corinthians 15:22). “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh” (Romans 7:18). “For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit” (Galatians 5:17). Most parents know from experience that no one has to teach their children to sin: children sin naturally. One definition for “limbo” (3A3, p.7) in Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary is “an intermediate or transitional place or state.” Ray’s theology seems to suggest some type of limbo between repentance and physical baptism. I never said that “God continued to give Pharaoh opportunity after opportunity to repent.” You won’t find the word “repent” near the word “Pharaoh” in the Bible. Pharaoh had been enlightened at some point in his life, and he was indeed conscious of his sins (Exodus 9:27, 10:16), but he never repented. That’s a sure sign of hardening. He was “unbelieving” (not willing to work for God); his mind and conscience were “defiled,” he professed “to

*know God;*” by his deeds he denied God (Titus 1:15,16). Pharaoh wanted cheap grace (forgiveness without repentance) (Exodus 10:17). At the end of 3A3, p.7, Ray shows that he does not understand that a Christian can be crucified by God in the midst of his backsliding, whether the Christian likes it or not. God afflicts and disciplines His own children (Psalms 119:67,71,75; Hebrews 12:4-11). We count the cost of discipleship and commit ourselves to take up the cross daily during the transition phase (Luke 9:23; 14:27,28).

3N4. Ray misses the point in 3A4, p.7. The lost people might continue trying to crucify Christ “*to themselves,*” but they still cannot be renewed to repentance **after** they have fallen away from the grace phase (2N4, p.6). I’ll deal with sacrifices in my first affirmative speech.

3N5. I disagree with Ray’s assessment of my theology’s implications in the case of Simon Magus. I never said that Simon “blasphemed the Spirit.” Simon “believed” and was baptized. It is possible for a lost person to intellectually believe in Jesus without coming under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The field of apologetics can be used to prepare the way for the Spirit’s work. I would assume that the majority of Samaritans mentioned in Acts 8:12 were true Christians rather than pretenders like Simon Magus.

3N6. I never said that a “backsliding Christian can lose his soul in hell.” I said that his soul can “experience death.” The Greek word for “soul” is *ψυχη*, and according to Arndt-Gingrich’s Lexicon it can mean “earthly life, seat of feelings and emotions.” The word *ψυχικος* is used in I Corinthians 2:14 to describe a natural or unspiritual man. Ray apparently fails to understand that the Word of God pierces to the division of soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12). “*The soul of the wicked desires evil*” (Proverbs 21:10). “*The spirit will return to God who gave it*” (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

3N7. Adam was not a saved person before his fall. Since he was not created with total depravity, he was in a free will phase until he fell from it. Ray’s “*son of God*” argument won’t hold up because the demons were called “*sons of God*” in Genesis 6:4. I never said that Solomon “could be lost.” The covenant I discussed had to do with the inheritance of his kingdom (a picture of the new covenant). In I Chronicles 28:6 God had “*chosen him to be a son*” (an adopted son, not a created one); that’s election language. I Corinthians 10:1-5 and Hosea 11:1 are referring to corporate election, not the election of particular individuals. The Jezebel I mentioned (Revelation 2:20) was a false teacher at Thyatira, not the Jezebel of the Old Testament.

3N8. In 1N10, p.4, I was saying that the second “*he*” in Hebrews 10:29 (according to some Baptists) could refer to a lost person or to Christ Himself. Jesus wasn’t blaspheming the Spirit in John 17:19 or here (2A8, p.5).

3N9. I’ll deal with 3A9, p.5, in my first affirmative speech.

3N10. Those who lose their part in the tree of life were not **actually** saved; they were only **potentially** saved (I John 2:2).

3N11. Peter was not in the transition phase when he denied Jesus; that’s the only time one can commit willful sin (by blaspheming the Spirit).

# Written Discussion On Apostasy

Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29 teach that a Christian may not fall from the grace of God and be lost.

**Affirm:** Mike Morris, pastor, First Baptist Church, Wickliffe, KY. **Deny:** Ray Hawk, minister, Campbell Street church of Christ, Jackson, TN.

*“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” (Hebrews 6:4-6).*

*“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” (Hebrews 10:25-29).*

## First Affirmative Speech By Mike Morris

**1A1.** Hebrews 9 and 10 deal a lot with Old Testament sacrifices. The Old Testament sacrifices for sin are a shadow or symbol of New Testament salvation (Hebrews 9:9; 10:1). Hebrews 9:7 tells us that on the Day of Atonement the high priest offered blood for sins “committed in ignorance.” Other sin offerings were also offered for “unintentional sins” (Leviticus 4:2,13,22; 5:15,17,18). The animals (representing Christ) were always males without defect (Leviticus 22:18-21; Numbers 29:8). Numbers 15:28-31 tells us that atonement could be made for the person who sins unintentionally, but the person who sinned “defiantly” did blaspheme God, and there was no sacrifice for his sin. The word for “wilfully” in Hebrews 10:26 is *εκουσιως*. According to Arndt-Gingrich’s Lexicon it means “without compulsion, i.e. deliberately, intentionally.” Why is this sin “without compulsion?” The person in the transition phase has temporarily been freed from slavery to his totally depraved nature and is not yet in slavery to God; he has total free will to make a choice. As in the Old Testament, if a person sins intentionally by blaspheming the Spirit in this phase, then no sacrifice can cover that sin. Such a person can expect nothing but judgment and fire (Hebrews 10:27). The Christian cannot commit intentional sin (I John 3:6,9); the righteous man (not his own righteousness, but Christ’s - Romans 3:10; 4:3,6-8,24; 8:10) “has an everlasting foundation” (Proverbs 10:25).

**1A2.** The key word in John 15:1-7 is “abide” (*μενω*). Arndt-Gingrich’s Lexicon says this about *μενω* in John’s gospel:

“The phrase *μ. εν τιμι* is a favorite of J to denote an inward, enduring personal communion...The possession is shown to be permanent by the expr. *εχειν τι μενον εν εαυτω* have someth. continually, permanently I J 3:15; the word of God J 5:38.”

A person is not a Christian until he commits himself to abide in Christ (I John 2:19). Those with easy believism became true disciples if they abided in His word (John 8:31). The Spirit abides with true disciples “forever” (John 14:16,17). Those born of God have the gospel seed abiding in them, and in one sense they cannot sin (I John 3:9). If a Christian in that sense cannot sin, then certainly he can’t

lose his salvation. His white garments haven't been soiled, and his name won't be erased from the book of life (Revelation 3:4,5; Psalm 69:28). Every human being has a name in the book of life and a part in the tree of life until willful sin is committed in the transition phase. They "*fall away*" because they "*have no firm root*" (Luke 8:13). Jesus "*is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world*" (I John 2:2). Thus, He **potentially** saved every person; in that sense when He offers to actually save us we are already "*in Christ*." If we decide not to abide in Christ, then the last state is worse than the first; we're no longer even potentially in Christ. Paul uses the phrase "*in Christ*" in a different sense than does John. Such a thing is not unusual for biblical writers. For example, Romans 3:20,28 and Galatians 2:16 would seem to contradict James 2:24 until one realizes that Paul was discussing a faith willing to work and that James was discussing a faith not willing to work. I don't think I made I John 3:6,9 and 5:18 contradict I John 1:7-10 (3A9, p.8).

1A3. Let's deal with the hardening concept. People who are hardened can't "*be converted*" (John 12:40). Hardened people are "*excluded from the life of God*" (Ephesians 4:18). Hardened people "*knew God*" but "*exchanged the glory*" they tasted for material things, and God "*gave them over*" to their sin (Romans 1:21-28). Those Jews who were individually chosen obtained salvation, and "*the rest were hardened*" (Romans 11:7). Moses in Deuteronomy 29:12 told the people, "*You may enter into the covenant with the Lord your God, and into His oath which the Lord your God is making with you today.*" If a person there refused to enter into the covenant ("*whose heart turns away today from the Lord*" in verse 18), then the Lord would "*never be willing to forgive him,*" and the Lord would "*blot out his name*" (Deuteronomy 29:20). The old covenant was a picture of the new covenant; Christ came not to destroy the old one, but to "*fulfill*" it (Matthew 5:17). The law is like a "*tutor to lead us to Christ*" (Galatians 3:24). The old covenant is obsolete because it has been fulfilled in the new covenant (Hebrews 8:13). Hardened people have a veil "*over their hearts*" (II Corinthians 3:14,15). God allows Satan to blind the minds of these unbelieving, perishing people (II Corinthians 4:3,4; Luke 8:12). Unbelief (lack of true faith) causes hardening and a falling away from the grace phase (Hebrews 3:7-12). God leads some lost people "*to repentance,*" but they fail to repent, and they store up wrath for themselves (Romans 2:4,5). The wrath of God "*abides*" on such people, and they will "*not see life*" (John 3:36). Certain people deny Christ during the grace phase; they were "*marked out for this condemnation*" beforehand (Jude 4); they are fruitless trees and are "*doubly dead*" (Jude 12).

1A4. Ray's answer to my question about II Peter 2:20 was interesting (Q & A 6, p.26). He says, "The first state is a person who has never heard the gospel." They escaped from it by "being immersed in water" (a second state). "When they fall from grace, they return to wallowing" (the third or last state). Why is the third state worse than the first? They're lost in both. Ray implies that the third state is worse because they got dirty again after being washed in the second state. But weren't those in the first state clean (innocent) as infants according to Ray? In both the first and third states they got dirty after they were away from the pollution of the world, didn't they? I believe that the second state here is not temporary Christianity; it's the transitional grace phase. The person comes to know "*the way of righteousness*" and then decides to "*turn away from the holy commandment*" to repent and have true faith. The last state is obviously worse because the person is now hardened, and the Spirit never places him under conviction again. The second state can last for seconds or years (depending on the individual situation), but the person must make an intentional, willful choice to accept or reject Jesus' lordship in his life "*as long as it is still called 'Today'*" (Hebrews 3:13).

## First Negative Speech By Ray Hawk

1N1. Strip away Mike's rhetoric and he will say the same as the following.

"We take the position that a Christian's sins do not damn his soul! The way a Christian lives, what he says, his character, his conduct, or his attitude toward other people have nothing whatever to do with



the salvation of his soul...and all the sins he may commit from idolatry to murder will not make his soul in any more danger...The way a man lives has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul" (Rev. Sam Morris, Pastor First Baptist Church, Stamford, TX, From **The Impossibility of Apostasy**, p.74, 1951). According to Sam Morris, an unrepentant, practicing homosexual Christian could go to heaven! This is the conclusion of once saved, always saved doctrine.

1N2. Mike continues in his failure to give proof from either Arndt-Gingrich or Thayer that his assumption on "*taste*" means to put it in your mouth but not swallow it (2A1, p.4). In fact, in Mike's 1N7, p.3, he mentions "Tasting miracles." Mike understands "tasting miracles" to mean having a miracle performed on you, not having a miracle tried on you but failing (tasting but not swallowing a miracle!). So, Mike goes against his own definition, contradicts the Lexicons, and refuses to accept God's word on the subject. His entire foundation for his doctrine depends upon his definition of "*taste*" and he has failed.

1N3. Either Jesus tasted death or he didn't. Mike wants it both ways (3N2, p.8). He contradicts the Bible, himself, and logic. Mike's definition of "*taste*" is that Jesus tasted death but did not swallow it. **THAT'S HIS DEFINITION OF TASTE!** I suppose Jesus just swooned?

1N4. Mike uses 12 passages in his attempt to prove that "babies are born with a willingness to sin" (3N3, p.8). None of them say one word about "willingness to sin." Babies have will. When they reach the age of accountability, they use that will to either obey or disobey, as did Adam. Mike doesn't believe they have the "will to obey" until a special "grace phase" in which a person may be in spiritual limbo for "seconds or years" (1A4, p.11). In this spiritual limbo one is neither lost nor saved! That may be Baptist doctrine, but it isn't Bible. Mike has to create this limbo to explain his doctrine.

1N5. Mike said Simon Magus was a "pretender" (1N9, p.3), "a slave of sin," "lost" (2N5, p.6), and that he "believed" and was baptized" (3N5, p.9). Mike also says that when a person is in the grace phase and rejects the gospel, he has committed the unpardonable sin. Now Mike contradicts himself and tries to back out on us. According to Mike, Simon Magus could have been a Christian, offered to buy the gift of God, as Peter denied Christ three times, and it would not have been "wilful sin" (3N11, p.9)! Ah consistency. Mike admits a Christian can deny Christ three times (why not 3,000?) and God will save him whether the denier wants to be saved or not! He admits the Samaritans were saved! If they were, so was Simon because the **HOLY SPIRIT** shows they both did exactly the same thing to be saved!

1N6. Mike says Adam "was not a saved person before his fall" (3N7, p.9), although he admits that Adam was a "*son of God*" (Luke 3:38). He wasn't lost and he wasn't saved, according to Mike, but Baptist error forces him to make this irrational statement. He is also irrational in his 3N8 and 1N10, ps.9,4). He doesn't know whether to make Christ a taster of sanctification which he spits out or not! Mike denies he said Solomon "could be lost" (3N7, p.9), yet this is the impression he left in 1N10, p.3 (I Chronicles 28:9). He admits demons were once "*sons of God*" (Genesis 6:4). I know that, but Mike says the Bible is wrong because that can't happen! It did!

1N7. Revelation 22:19 is not talking about "potentially" saved people. Folks who are **IN** the book of life are saved. People who are **OUT** of it are lost. The one who "*takes away*" from the book of Revelation is a Christian who will have his name taken **OUT** for doing so. Mike's doctrine denies what this passage teaches!

1N8. Mike, why leave the impression with our readers in 1A1, p.10, that God only forgives sins "*committed in ignorance*" and not those committed wilfully (Leviticus 5:1-14)? That omission negates your entire affirmative! Mike defines Biblical words with Calvinistic meanings rather than God's. He thinks the lost sin wilfully and the saved sin ignorantly. Ignorant sins may be forgiven but not wilful

ones. One wonders if Peter was ignorant of what he was doing when he denied Christ (Matthew 26:58,69-75)?

1N9. Mike continues to be confused on John 15:1-7. Mike thinks you can be IN Christ, decide that you don't want to ABIDE IN him, and that when you are BROKEN OFF and stop being IN Christ that you weren't IN him to begin with! That may be Baptist doctrine, but not Bible! Keep trying Mike. This passage is the death song of your doctrine.

1N10. Mike has a person saved ("in the book of life") until he decides to not accept Christ during the grace phase which may last seconds or years (1A2, p.10,11). He believes this person may not come into this grace phase until he is quite old. A saved person into late adulthood! Where will Mike venture next?

1N11. In 1A3, p.11, Mike has God's people hardened and lost, which his whole doctrine says cannot be done. Mike, your contradictions negate your entire affirmative.

1N12. The first state I referred to on II Peter 2:20-22 was the lost state which the accountable finds himself in the first time he sins. However, Mike has those who are neither lost nor saved going back into the mire state which according to him is the clean (innocent) state. Ah consistency.

1N13. Mike's inconsistencies and contradictions negate his affirmative and destroy his proposition.

## Second Affirmative Speech By Mike Morris

2A1. It's interesting that up until this point in the debate (including the questions and answers) I have made 284 specific references to biblical passages (citing chapter and verses), and Ray has made only 169 such references. Ray's strategy seems to involve quoting other Baptists and paraphrasing me.

2A2. Arndt-Gingrich's Lexicon does not use the exact words that Ray thinks I need to prove my point for "taste," but it also does not use the word "swallow" which I think Ray would need to prove his point. It's a miracle when a lost person is placed under conviction by the Spirit; it's also a miracle when a person is baptized by the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). It's a miracle when an old creature is transformed into a new creature. Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines the word "miracle" as "an extraordinary event manifesting a supernatural work of God." Ray says, "I haven't seen anyone perform miracles" (Q & A 12, p.27). How about God? "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever*" (Hebrews 13:8).

2A3. I'll repeat what I said in 3N2, p.8. "I listed two senses in which Jesus tasted death." He tasted death in the grave and spat it out at the resurrection; He tasted the pain of death on the cross and freely accepted His predestined fate (2N2, p.5). Jesus didn't swoon; He actually died physically, but He rejected that physical death later. One can actually taste the Spirit during the transition phase and reject it at the end of the phase.

2A4. Ray apparently thinks that one can become a Christian by his own willpower apart from the Spirit's work (1N4, p.12). Romans 9:16 says, "*It does not depend on the man who wills...but on God who has mercy.*" Contrary to what Ray thinks my theology implies, I believe that if a man were to die during the transition phase (before he accepted Christ as Lord), then he would go to hell.

2A5. I never said, "Simon Magus could have been a Christian" (1N5, p.12). Ray says that Simon and the Samaritans "did exactly the same thing to be saved." The demons also "believe" (James 2:19); is baptism the only thing they lack for salvation? Obviously, there are two different kinds of belief. Isn't every sin committed by a Christian in one sense a denial of Christ (I Timothy 5:8)? The only time denial of Christ condemns one to hell is when one denies Him during the transition phase. It's interesting that Luke 12:9 speaks of this denial right before the blasphemy of the Spirit is discussed in

the next verse. During the transition phase one must decide whether to deny Christ or self. *“If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself”* (Matthew 16:24).

**2A6.** Ray says that I admit “demons were once ‘sons of God’ (Genesis 6:4).” Not only do I admit that; I go beyond that and say that they continued to be called *“sons of God”* after they became demons (Genesis 6:4). Do you think God would allow good angels to have sex with humans? Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon defines the word “Nephilim” from Genesis 6:4 as “giants...fallers, rebels, apostates.” Thus, the *“sons of God”* here were certainly not saved people. The biblical phrase *“sons of God”* can refer to directly created beings, to Jesus Christ, or to Christians. Adam fit into the first category.

**2A7.** I disagree with Ray’s interpretation of Revelation 22:19.

**2A8.** In response to 1N8, p.12, I think the Bible is what left that impression with Ray. It’s pretty clear from Scripture that willful sins are not forgiven (Hebrews 10:26; Numbers 15:30) and that refusal to enter into an individual covenant relationship with God would result in one’s name being blotted out (Deuteronomy 29:12-20). It’s also clear from Scripture that atonement was made for those who sinned *“unintentionally”* (Numbers 15:28), i.e. for sins *“committed in ignorance”* (Hebrews 9:7). Peter’s sin was obviously one of ignorance because he had forgotten what Jesus had said until he heard the cock (Matthew 26:75).

**2A9.** John 15:2 speaks of the type of branch that *“does not bear fruit”* (non-Christian). *“Every good tree bears good fruit”* (Matthew 7:17). Revelation 14:18,19 speaks of judgment on the *“vine of the earth.”* All non-Christians are included in the vine.

**2A10.** I don’t have a person **actually** saved; I have a person **potentially** saved in the book of life until his name is blotted out at the time when he rejects Jesus in the transition phase.

**2A11.** There’s a difference between corporate election and individual election. That’s how a Jew could have Abraham as a father and Satan as a father at the same time (John 8:37-44). Israel was a chosen nation, but a Jew had to be individually chosen to be actually saved (Romans 11:7).

**2A12.** Ray says in 1N12, p.13, that “the first state...was the lost state.” Ray, why then is the last state worse than the first state? They’re lost in both states. I believe that the last state is worse because of hardening. I never said that “the mire state...is the clean (innocent) state” (1N12, p.13). In 1A4, p.11, I said, “But weren’t those in the first state clean (innocent) as infants **according to Ray**?” Notice that Ray uses the words “according to him” in 1N12, p.13. It’s an interesting time for Ray to use the word “consistency.” Ray apparently believes that infants are innocent until they are entangled in the mire at the age of accountability. I believe that infants are born entangled in the mire (totally depraved, willing to sin) but that God doesn’t hold them accountable for their sins until they reach the age of accountability, an age at which they can understand the gospel and become Christians. Thus, because infants aren’t held accountable, in one sense they haven’t **actually** sinned in infancy (1N8, p.3).

**2A13.** I’d like to hear Ray’s comments on the following verses: II John 2, II Timothy 1:12, I Peter 1:3-5.

## Second Negative Speech By Ray Hawk

**2N1.** 284 scriptures without proper argumentation proves nothing. Mike do you agree with Sam Morris or is he accursed (Galatians 1:6-9)? **Dr. Clyde Tilley** was fired from Union University for repudiating once saved, always saved. An Union Old Testament professor was charged recently with rape and possession of marijuana. Are he and Tilley accursed? Perhaps neither were ever saved?

2N2. Mike admits that Arndt-Gingrich does not give his definition of “*taste*.” Mike assumes I Corinthians 12:13 is Holy Ghost baptism. He forgets our debate on salvation and what I said in N2G, p.5. Mike thinks salvation is a miracle and uses an erroneous Pentecostal argument to prove it. Salvation is a result of natural, spiritual law being taught and one obeying what is commanded (Luke 8:11; Acts 2:38-41). Hebrews 13:8 is one of 285 passages Mike loosely uses and fails to prove his assumption. Mike, just because you can’t take up serpents, does that mean Jesus isn’t the same (Mark 16:17,18)? Do so and I’ll concede this debate. If not, concede it to me or stop misapplying scripture.

2N3. Mike makes up definitions and expects us to accept them. Jesus tasted death. He either died or he didn’t. Mike’s definition of “*taste*” would have Jesus tasting of it but not dying. Yet, he admits he really died. Therefore taste means to taste and swallow, not taste and spit out as Mike defines it. Jesus tasted death just as he tasted the resurrection. In neither does the word taste fit Mike’s definition. Without confirmation of his definition, Mike’s doctrine fails and he concedes the debate.

2N4. Romans 9:16 doesn’t teach that man cannot do the will of God (Matthew 7:21). Mike believes it takes a miracle worked upon you before you can have free will. Let him prove it by taking up serpents! Otherwise his assumptions are meaningless. Mike has the lost IN grace (3N4, p.9), freed from slavery (1A1, p.10), “*a name in the book of life*” and “*a part in the tree of life*” (1A2, p.10) but now says they are lost and would go to hell! People in hell who have their name in the book of life and who have a part in the tree of life! He says babies are not held accountable, yet he says “totally depraved” people are “lost” and admits “people are born totally depraved” (1N8, p.3). Therefore, according to Mike, babies, born totally depraved are lost people and lost people go to hell! See Mike’s confusion?

2N5. Mike gives 1 Timothy 5:8, but it proves a Christian can deny the faith and be worse than an infidel! The Spirit shows Simon and the Samaritans did exactly the same thing and all were Christians, but Mike rejects the Spirit’s testimony, I don’t. Is Mike guilty of blaspheming the Spirit?

2N6. Genesis 6:4 says nothing about angels having sex. Another of Mike’s misapplication of scripture. The “*sons of God*” were godly humans who married ungodly daughters of men. Mike thinks you can be a “*son of God*” and not be saved...lost! Yet, that is a denial of his proposition. Mike claims Adam was a son of God but before his fall was not saved. Not lost nor saved. Spiritual limbo. Yet Mike states that folks who haven’t been saved are lost. If Adam wasn’t saved, he was lost. See Mike’s confusion?

2N7. Mike disagrees with what I said on Revelation 22:19, but to disagree does not disprove. Try again Mike. Revelation 22:19 with John 15:1-7 destroys your doctrine.

2N8. Mike refuses to notice Leviticus 5:1-14 on forgiving wilful sins, the passage just before Leviticus 5:15,17,18 which he gave to prove that wilful sins are not forgiven (1A1, p.10). Mike misapplies Hebrews 10:26 and Numbers 15:28-30 to assume what he needs to prove. Mike’s use of Numbers 15:28-30 is humorous. Here is a child of God committing presumptuous sin, something Mike says is impossible. Mike thinks Peter’s denial was ignorant, non-wilful sin. Whether Peter remembered what the Lord said while denying him isn’t the issue, did he think three denials were right? Did Peter want to do what he did? Mike uses Deuteronomy 29:12-20 to talk about “*the book of life*” and “*blotted out*,” but the passage says nothing about either. Another striking example of how Mike makes “specific” references to scripture, but which do not prove what he says they state.

2N9. “*Every branch IN me that beareth not fruit he taketh away...and they are burned*” (John 15:2,7). These branches (individuals) were IN Jesus Christ. To be IN Christ is to be a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17). Yet, they are taken away! Burned! Every time Mike uses John 15, it destroys his doctrine worse than the time before. Try one more time Mike.

**2N10. Actually and Potentially saved?** Mike's doctrine is a made up one (Galatians 1:6-9).

**2N11.** John 8:37-44 shows children of God could fall from grace and become children of the devil, the Spirit's doctrine which Mike rejects! Mike uses Romans 11:7 to prove Israel was "individually chosen." That passage is speaking about New Testament election, not Old. Another case of misapplying scripture on Mike's part.

**2N12.** Mike believes infants are born totally depraved...in sin...lost. He says they are "entangled in the mire." When is this baby held accountable for his sins? "Every human being has a name in the book of life and a part in the tree of life **until willful sin is committed in the transition phase.**" Yet, in 2A4, p.13, Mike says he would go to hell if he died "before he accepted Christ as Lord." Mike doesn't know whether babies are going to hell or not. One time he says no, the next time yes. Mike is confused!

**2N13.** I am not in the affirmative, if Mike will make an argument on II John 2, II Timothy 1:12, and I Peter 1:3-5, I'll reply to each. I love Mike and hope he will see the error his way and reject his indefensible doctrine.

### **Third Affirmative Speech By Mike Morris**

**3A1.** I had assumed that our debate would be based on Scripture and not on what other Baptists have said or done, but I'll be a good sport and answer Ray's questions. I don't agree with everything in the Sam Morris quote (1N1, p.12). I don't think a true Christian will commit murder unless he's mentally ill. I don't personally know the two former Union professors. Ray mentions Galatians 1:6-9. That passage speaks of being accursed for "*preaching another gospel*" (Ray's A2D in 1st debate, p.8). The gospel deals with how to be saved. I assume those two men agree with me in regard to how a lost person is saved. Ray believes that a lost person first gets into Jesus by belief plus physical immersion; then, Ray indicates that if that person loses his salvation and is out of Christ again, he can get back into Christ without physical immersion (Q & A 15, p.28). Are you advocating two different ways to be saved, Ray? That really would be a different gospel.

**3A2.** In N2G, p.5 of our first debate Ray explained I Corinthians 12:13 by saying, "Men immersed candidates in water into Christ by the Holy Spirit (as he gave them inspired instruction)." The verse says nothing about men performing the baptism or about the Spirit instructing them. I'm shocked that Ray believes that salvation is not a miracle (2N2, p.15). Luke 5:30-32 makes it clear that lost folks are sick and in need of supernatural healing. See also John 12:40, Acts 28:27, and Revelation 22:2. When God supernaturally answers our prayers and changes the natural course of events, isn't that a miracle? Do you believe in the immutability of God, Ray? See Malachi 3:6, Psalms 102:27, Hebrews 1:12, Hebrews 6:17, and James 1:17. If salvation is not a miracle, then the Holy Spirit is not needed on earth today (2A2, p.13). Ray, do you think the Holy Spirit retired after the New Testament was published? The Spirit clearly will continue His work on earth until Jesus returns (Revelation 22:17). The natural man can't understand spiritual things without the Spirit's help (I Corinthians 2:14). The Spirit hasn't retired! See I Corinthians 6:19, II Corinthians 3:6, Ephesians 5:18, II Thessalonians 2:13, John 1:13, Ephesians 6:11-17, Galatians 5:16-23, and Romans 8:9-14. Ray asks me about Mark 16:17-18 in 2N2, p.15. I don't think we should handle snakes in worship services; however, I do think that God can still supernaturally intervene to protect us. I don't limit God; He's still omnipotent.

**3A3.** I haven't seen any confirmation of Ray's definition of "*taste.*" Ordinary life situations provide confirmation for my definition. For instance, any tobacco chewer knows that there is a big difference between tasting and swallowing.

3A4. Ray mentions the book of life in 2N4, p.15. “*And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire*” (Revelation 20:15). See also Daniel 12:1. Many people think that God writes their name in the book of life at the moment they become Christians. That’s not true. The ones who are thrown into the lake of fire at the end of time are those “*whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world*” (Revelation 17:8). Did only the elect Christians have their name there at the beginning, or did all people have their name there? I John 2:2 gives the answer. At the end of time, only the names of the elect will still be written there; God chose them on the basis of His foreknowledge (I Peter 1:1-2). When God knew that a person would choose Jesus if given a chance to do so, then God predestined that person to have such a chance. In 2N8, p.15, Ray says that Deuteronomy 29:12-20 says nothing about being “*blotted out.*” Look again at verse 20 in the NASV.

3A5. I Timothy 5:8 merely says that sometimes lost people take better care of their families than do Christians. This can be true for any sin of ignorance. I might be jealous of a certain man; an unbeliever might not be. Thus, I would be worse than an unbeliever. It’s a denial of the faith because the Christian has acted worse than an unbeliever. Notice that the Christian has not become an unbeliever; he’s still being compared with one.

3A6. Has Ray changed his position on the “*sons of God*”? Compare 2N6, p.15, with 1N6, p.12. Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon states, “The appellation of ‘sons of God,’ is given in the Old Test. - (a) to angels, Genesis 6:2, seq.; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Ps.29:1; 89:7; either as the hosts and attendants of God, or on account of a greater likeness to the divine nature, although a body is attributed to them. Gen. loc. cit.”

3A7. Ray didn’t reply to the verses I cited in 2A9, p.14, for John 15:1-7. I dealt with Revelation 22:19 in Q & A 16, p.23.

3A8. Ray says that Leviticus 5:1-14 deals with willful sins. I don’t see the word “*wilful,*” “*intentional,*” or “*defiant*” there. The priests were to offer sacrifices (pictures of the cross) for the sins (vs.1-4). Remember, for wilful sin there is no sacrifice (Hebrews 10:26). Ray says that “a child of God” commits “presumptuous sin” in Numbers 15:28-30. Ray again fails to see the difference between corporate and individual election. The passage deals with an individual, not the entire nation.

3A9. I explained “*in Christ*” in 1A2, p.10.

3A10. I didn’t say that the nation of “Israel was ‘individually chosen’” (2N11, p.16). The nation of Israel was corporately chosen. See Isaiah 41:8-9, 44:1, and 45:4. Romans 11:7 was indeed speaking of Israel in the Old Testament. Notice the Old Testament quotes in verses 8-10.

3A11. While discussing infants in 2N12, p.16, Ray quotes a section of my 2A4, p.13. Notice that I used the word “man” rather than “infant” in the sentence from which Ray took the quote. Did Ray inappropriately lift that quote from its proper context? The only biblical passages Ray has used to make his case for infants are Ezekiel 18:20, Matthew 18:3, and Matthew 19:14 (2A3, p.13, Q & A 13, p.27, A2E, p.9 of 1st debate). Ezekiel 18:20 deals with immediate parents, not Adam. Matthew 18:3 and 19:14 both say that we must be like children to enter heaven. How are Christians like children? Both groups in one sense don’t **actually** sin; the wages of **actual** sin is death (Romans 6:23). Apparently Ray and I agree that infants and young children are not held accountable by God for the “bad” things they do. Similarly, the sins of Christians are covered and not taken into account (Romans 4:7-8). See I John 3:6-9 and 5:18. Both groups are still disciplined (Proverbs 13:24, Hebrews 12:5-9) even though they’re forgiven.

3A12. II John 2 says the truth “*will be with us forever.*” Jesus is able to “*save forever*” (Hebrews 7:25). II Timothy 1:12 says He is able to guard us until He returns. I Peter 1:3-5 says we have an imperishable inheritance reserved for us “*who are protected by the power of God.*” I want to thank Ray for the opportunity to debate. We still love each other as friends.

### Third Negative Speech By Ray Hawk

3N1. Mike refuses to give proof that “*taste*” (*yevouai*) means taste **and spit out** (3A3, p.17). Instead of Greek authorities, he builds his case on “*tobacco chewing*” (3A3, p.17)! Mike keeps asking me to affirm my definition of taste. He’s confused. He was affirming and was obligated to prove his proposition! He had none. Mike’s proposition fails. Mike’s definition of “*taste*” has Jesus swooning but not really dying (Hebrews 2:9). Mike assumes I teach that one falls outside of Jesus when he sins. Mike can’t understand what I teach because he refuses to understand John 15:1-7 and Revelation 22:18,19! That’s sad.

3N2. Mike parades several passages before us but they say nothing about “*lost folks*” being in need of “*supernatural*” healing. He believes folks who die before they reach the grace phase go to hell (2A4, p.13). He contradicts himself by stating that one is “*in the book of life*” and has a part in the tree of life until he commits sin “*in the transition phase*” (1A2, p.11). In Mike’s logic, the only time a person commits an intentional sin, is when he rejects Christ during this “*grace phase.*” All sins committed before the grace phase or after becoming a Christian are not intentional and therefore **not actual!** Mike’s doctrine concludes that from infancy to the grace phase, one has never **actually sinned** therefore he was never lost (1A2, pp.10,11)! Mike’s says a Christian cannot **actually** sin. Yet, the two former Union professors sinned. Either they intentionally sinned and never were saved (Baptist doctrine), or they unintentionally sinned, making rape, smoking marijuana, and advocating false doctrine, sins one may persist in and still be saved in, because they aren’t **actual!** That may be Baptist doctrine, but it isn’t Bible. If denying the doctrine of once saved, always saved isn’t **actual sin**, therefore not **intentional**, Union should not have fired Dr. Clyde Tilley!

3N3. I believe in God’s immutability, but Mike’s passages say nothing about lost folks needing **miraculous** healing. Mike boldly states that God “*supernaturally answers our prayers*” but lamely admits “*I don’t think we should handle snakes*” (3A2, p.16). Supernatural (miraculous) answer to prayer and handling of snakes stand or fall together! Mike introduces several passages (3A2, p.16). Yet none teach miraculous healing today. None use Mike’s terminology. The Spirit saves today as he did in the first century by one obeying his written commands (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16) just as one obeyed the oral commands then. Mike doesn’t believe this can happen without a **miracle**. Mike expects us to believe his assumptions, yet refuses to drink poison or pick up snakes (Mark 16:17-20). Ah, consistency.

3N4. Mike claims “*sons of God*” were and are demons (2A6, p.14). He says they “*continue to be called ‘sons of God’ after they became demons*” (2A6, p.14). I suppose we should call Christians “*children of the devil*” since they once were! Yet he was trying to prove in this debate that “*sons of God*” **CANNOT BECOME DEMONS!** The Spirit calls Adam (individual election) “*the son of God*” (Luke 3:38). Mike says he wasn’t saved before his fall and is lost now (3N7, p.9)! That’s Mike’s gospel, not God’s. Mike is adamant on “*sons of God*” (individual election) **being lost!** Yet, he believes it is impossible for a child of God to be lost. Do you see Mike’s confusion (I Corinthians 14:33)? Those human “*sons of God*” in Genesis 6:4 married the sinful “*daughters of men*” and became slaves of the devil. They are **now** his demons (children). Mike admits it, and then contradicts himself by saying that it can’t happen.

3N5. Mike takes Deuteronomy 29 which happens to be “*children of God*” who “intentionally” sin and are blotted out. Yet Mike doesn’t believe children of God can intentionally sin, nor that they may be blotted out! Why not accept the Bible?

3N6. Mike perverts Revelation 22:18,19! He **adds** words to the text like “potentially” and “actual” (2A10, p.14). If a person is **in** the book of Life, he is saved. If he isn’t in it, he is lost. One cannot have his name removed from where it isn’t found in the first place. If one’s name is in the book and removed, it means he was saved and is then lost. Mike continues to avoid this truth here and in his Q & A 16, p.23.

3N7. Mike rewrote I Timothy 5:8 (3A5, p.17). Mike thinks the Christian may act worse than an infidel, keep on doing so, and never be lost because this is neither intentional nor **actual** sin (3A11, p.18). Mike doesn’t believe a Christian will do this, yet admits backsliding! Mike has saints denying the faith, yet doesn’t think that’s possible! See his confusion?

3N8. I didn’t refer to Matthew 7 nor Revelation 14 (3A7, p.17) because John 15:2 does not speak of non-Christians. A non-Christian is not **IN** Christ! From Mike’s comments, he has been reading Baptist doctrine not John 15:1-7. It says, “*Every branch IN ME that beareth not fruit he taketh away*” (John 15:2). Every branch **IN** me! **IN** me. He didn’t say, “*Every branch not in me.*” Mike **adds** Baptist doctrine to the word of God by inserting, “*Every branch potentially in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.*” One should not **add** to God’s word (Galatians 1:6-9; II John 9; Revelation 22:18,19).

3N9. When a person sins, he cannot be forgiven while he wilfully remains in it. However, when he repents (something Mike doesn’t believe can happen), as David (individual election) and Israel (corporate election) did, then the willfulness has ceased and the person and/or nation has turned/repented to God and is forgiven (Psalm 51:1-11; Isaiah 44:22; Jeremiah 4:1; 24:7).

3N10. Ezekiel 18:20, if carried from father to son, would eventually put us back to Adam. We bear the **consequences** of Adam’s sin, not the **guilt**. Mike’s logic makes Christians be like children who are **totally depraved** to get into heaven (3A11, p.17,18).

3N11. “*Forever*” means “*completely*” in the NASV footnote of Hebrews 7:25 (3A12, p.18). Mike thinks it means “once saved, always saved.” Not so. I Peter 1:3-5 uses the expression “*Who are kept by the power of God THROUGH FAITH unto salvation.*” Mike thinks folks will be kept against their will. If one’s faith is lost, God is no longer obligated to keep him in his salvation (John 15:1-7). Mike would populate heaven with people who lose their faith, deny it, and who prefer the devil.

3N12. Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29 show that some Christians did slide back into Judaism. The sacrifices of Judaism could not remit their sins (Hebrews 10:1-4, 26). As long as they wilfully remained in Judaism and away from the fellowship of the blood of Christ, they could not be forgiven (John 8:24; I John 1:6,7). If they returned to Christ, they could once again receive the cleansing of his sacrifice (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19,20).

I appreciate Mike and his willingness to debate this issue. He is my friend. Although we disagreed before this discussion and continue to do so, we can disagree without being disagreeable. May God help us as we study his word and seek to know his will.



# Questions

## Questions For Mike Morris

1. Do you believe the book of Hebrews is written to people who have experienced a “*faith willing to work*”?

**Reply:** I believe that the book of Hebrews was written to two different groups of people. One group was made up of those with easy believism; the other group was made up of those with a faith willing to work.

2. Do you believe the ones being described in Hebrews 6:4-6 and Hebrews 10:25-29 were folks who had experienced a “*faith willing to work*”?

**Reply:** No, I think they were unwilling to surrender every part of their lives to Jesus.

3. If you do not believe those being described in Hebrews 6:4-6 were children of God (those who had experienced a faith that is willing to work), why does it say they 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*” (Hebrews 6:4-5)?

**Reply:** Many lost people see the light of Jesus (Matthew 4:16; Luke 2:32), but many in darkness do not “seize it” or “make it their own” (*katalambano*) (John 1:5). Many lost people “taste” the gift of salvation and spit it out (II Corinthians 6:1,2; Hebrews 2:3); only “eaters” are actually saved (John 6:51-58). Many tasters fall away due to lack of true faith (Hebrews 3:12; Matthew 13:20-21; Galatians 5:4). They may be professors, but they aren’t possessors. Many lost people have partaken of the Holy Spirit while under conviction (John 16:8; I Thessalonians 1:5), but many lost people resist the Spirit (Acts 7:51; Hebrews 10:29), and these who lack true faith are not sealed with the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). Many lost people taste the Word of God and the powers of the world to come, but many reject them and even desire to kill God’s instruments (Acts 6:7-12). Tasting is not enough; one must swallow the gospel in faith to become a Christian.

4. In your N2E, page Nine, you stated that “*Baptists used to believe that some babies went to hell. Some Baptists may believe that; they were wrong.*” does that mean you believe they have fallen from grace and are lost?

**Reply:** I’m not sure I understand your question. I was saying in N2E that I have disagreed with some Baptists concerning their position on infants. It’s obvious that Baptists don’t agree on everything; remember that Alexander Campbell was a Baptist before 1832. if you’re asking me why those Baptists believed that some infants go to hell, then I can only answer by guessing that those Baptists believed that God knew that the condemned infants would have rejected Christ had they lived long enough to hear and understand the gospel. Most Baptists today agree with me that infants are not held accountable by God.

5. Do you believe the book of Galatians is written to children of God (Christians - those who have experienced a faith that is willing to work)?

**Reply:** I believe that the book of Galatians was written to the same two groups of people as are addressed in the book of Hebrews. Both books deal some with theological problems brought on by legalistic Judaizers.

6. Do you believe a child of God (Christian - one who has experienced a faith that is willing to work) can fall from grace?

**Reply:** No. However, I believe that all Christians do sin at times, but Jesus is our advocate when we sin (I John 2:1,2; Romans 4:8). Christ's one-time sacrifice covers all our sins (Hebrews 10:14). We are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8,9), and we are supposed to walk by grace through faith after we've been saved (II Corinthians 5:7; Philippians 3:16; II John 6). If a person is really a Christian, then his backsliding can only go so far before God restores him; he never falls out of grace. His fellowship with God might be temporarily less than ideal, but he never loses his father-child relationship with God. I believe that Galatians 5:1-4 is dealing with lost people who had been temporarily given free will to choose Jesus, and these lost people were tempted to listen to legalistic Judaizers who urged them to try and combine faith and works (physical circumcision) to achieve salvation. If a lost person tries to add works to the formula, he falls from grace. Romans 8:17,18,22 gives us the order of events:

**A.** We're slaves to sin from birth. Total depravity means that our old nature is completely evil and that our will is not free. Our will is bound by sin (Psalm 51:5; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 5:19). We're born with the desire to sin due to the first Adam's sin. Jesus, the last Adam (I Corinthians 15:45), was the only human since Adam and Eve born without this depravity or desire to sin. Jesus, like the first Adam, had complete free will from the time He was born. Unlike the first Adam, Jesus did not fall to temptation. The first Adam was only a man. The last Adam was both God and man.

**B.** We're temporarily freed from slavery when placed under conviction by the Holy Spirit. For the first time in our lives we truly have free will. The Spirit brings this freedom (II Corinthians 3:17; I Corinthians 2:10-12). God opens our hearts in this phase (Acts 16:14). People here experience easy believism because they have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit; they must decide whether or not to surrender all of their lives to Christ (faith that's willing to work, total commitment). God the Father has drawn people to Jesus in this phase so that they can receive Jesus as Lord of their lives (John 6:44,65). Lost people in this phase have tasted grace (Titus 2:11) but do not yet possess true faith. If they choose to reject Jesus' lordship, then they have received grace in vain (II Corinthians 6:1,2) and have neglected the salvation offer (Hebrews 2:3). Such lost people who refuse to commit themselves to Christ have committed the unpardonable sin and have insulted (blasphemed) the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:29; Mark 3:29). This lack of true faith in response to the offer of salvation means that they are condemned and that they have in one sense been judged already (John 3:18). Such lost people have fallen from grace because of their lack of faith at this crucial time (Hebrews 3:12). The Israelites gave us a picture of this phase when they arrived at the border of the promise land. They had tasted God's miracles and words, but when the time came for them to risk their lives in faith, many wanted to return to slavery in Egypt rather than cross over into the promised land. Their hearts were hardened, and they didn't get a second chance to enter the promised land. That generation was condemned because their faith was not the kind of faith that was willing to work (Hebrews 3:7-19). People today may hear the gospel many times, but the Spirit only brings us under conviction once. "Today" doesn't last forever (Hebrews 3:13). It may take a long time for us to decide whether to ultimately accept or reject Jesus as lord of our lives, but once that decision is made, it's final. When a person rejects Jesus as Lord in this phase they are hardened (Romans 9:17,18; 11:7-10). God gives such people over to sin (Romans 1:24,26,28). They have returned to slavery to sin, and the last state is worse than the first (II Peter 2:20-22). These who have tasted Jesus but don't want to abide in Him are cast out and burned (John 15:6). It's impossible for them to ever repent again (Hebrews 6:46). Jesus would have to get back on the cross again; no sacrifice remains for them (Hebrews 10:26). They have wilfully sinned by rejecting Jesus during the time they had free will to choose their master. Demons are another example of beings who fell during a time when they had the free will to choose

their master (Revelation 12:9). When they rejected God they were hardened and changed into demons. They had committed the unpardonable sin, and today they cannot repent and become good angels. Some human tasters fall, but they “*were not really of us*” (I John 2:19).

C. We become slaves to God after accepting Christ’s lordship with a faith that’s willing to work. The rich, young ruler wanted eternal life, but he could not have it because he was not willing to surrender all to Jesus. One thing, his wealth, sent him to hell. We must commit ourselves to Jesus’ lordship. We are sealed in Jesus with the Holy Spirit when we have true faith in Jesus (Ephesians 1:13). We have become new creatures (II Corinthians 5:17). We became new creatures because we were willing to lose our old lives (Matthew 16:25). Jesus chose us to bear fruit (John 15:16). We were chosen (**elektos**) according to God’s foreknowledge (**prognosis**) (I Peter 1:1,2; Ephesians 1:4,5; II Thessalonians 2:13; II Timothy 2:10). God’s order is found in Romans 8:29,30: He foreknew Christians (**proginosko**); then He predestined them (**proorizo**); then He called them (**kaleo**); then He justified them (**dikaio**); then He glorified them (**doxazo**). He knew beforehand what we would do if we heard the gospel and were placed under conviction (foreknowledge). He decided beforehand that all those who would choose to have true faith in Christ would have a chance to do so and be placed under conviction at some point in their lives (predestination). He also decided beforehand that some who would reject Christ if they had the chance would also be placed under conviction; they would be hardened after rejecting God and would be used by God as in the case of Pharaoh (Romans 9:17,18). God then actually called those whom He had predestined to hear the gospel. They then have free will to accept or reject the gospel. Predestination doesn’t preclude the possibility of free will. Remember that Jesus was predestined to die on the cross, but He could have freely chosen to come down from that cross before He died. If the person being called freely decides to accept that call with true faith, then the person is justified in God’s eyes, and all sins are forgiven. Glorification occurs at the time of physical death. The person with true faith already has eternal life (John 5:24), and he will never perish (John 10:28). Nothing can separate him from the love of God (Romans 8:35-39). Jesus is the author and perfecter of his faith (Hebrews 12:2). All Christians are kept safe for Jesus (Jude 1; I Peter 1:5) and are not condemned (Romans 8:1).

7. If a Christian may fall from grace, where is he since he no longer is where he was before he fell from it?

**Reply:** A Christian can’t fall from grace.

8. If the apostle Peter and the apostle Paul became homosexual lovers and remained in that condition until they died, would they go to heaven?

**Reply:** Peter and Paul would not become homosexual lovers because they were Christians. I Corinthians 6:9 says that homosexuals will not go to heaven. Let’s remember that any sin will send a lost person to hell (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

9. Do you believe that God foreordained, before the world was created, who would be of the elect and who would be of the non-elect?

**Reply:** If you mean by the word “foreordained” that God decreed that some would be saved and others condemned for no particular reason, then I say “no” in answer to your question.

10. Do you believe those chosen by God to be of the elect did not do anything to be saved, therefore they cannot do anything to be unsaved?

**Reply:** I believe that the Christian elect are those who have a faith that’s willing to work and they never lose their salvation.

11. Does a person have free choice when he experiences the faith that is willing to work?

**Reply:** Yes; see 6B.

12. Does that same person continue to have free choice once he has experienced that kind of faith?

**Reply:** In one sense he does. If we abide in Jesus' word in the crucial phase and don't spit it out, then we become true disciples (John 8:31). The truth makes us free (John 8:32) in the sense that we can freely choose not to sin. If people are slaves to sin, then they cannot freely choose not to sin; sin is their master. Christians have been set free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). However, in another sense a slave to God is not a free person. We were freed from sin but have become God's slaves (Romans 6:22). We are not free to leave our new master. No one can serve two masters (Luke 16:13). Christians make a life-long commitment to leave their old sin master and stay under the control of their new master (God). This commitment is a covenant (pledge, contract, promise). Therefore, in answer to your question I have to say "yes" and "no."

13. If a person has free choice before and after he experiences the faith that is willing to work, can he make the choice to reject that faith and be in rebellion to God?

**Reply:** No. A lost person is a slave to sin and is free to rebel against righteousness (Romans 6:20). A saved person is a slave to righteousness and is free to rebel against sin (Romans 6:18).

14. Can a good tree, with good fruit, decide to not bear fruit?

**Reply:** All good trees eventually bear good fruit (Matthew 7:17). Mature Christians bear more good fruit than immature Christians (I John 2:12-14). Bearing fruit has a lot to do with the Spirit's work inside Christians (Galatians 5:22,23). Backsliding Christians obviously don't bear as much fruit as other Christians. A good tree cannot decide not to bear fruit because bearing spiritual fruit is not a function of brain matter. Paul in I Thessalonians 5:23 tells us that we are three-part beings having bodies, souls, and human spirits. Our soul (*psyche*) is where we feel emotions (Matthew 26:38); it is also translated as "mind" (Acts 14:2). Our volition is there in the soul. Preaching the gospel can be entirely fleshly, or it can be spiritual and come from the Holy Spirit through our human spirit (*pneuma*) (Romans 1:9). Jesus said that true worshippers should worship in spirit (John 4:23,24).

15. If a good tree stops bearing fruit, or begins bearing bad fruit, what should be done to it?

**Reply:** A good tree will not stop bearing good fruit. Jesus will perfect or complete us (Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 12:2,23; I Peter 5:10). A good tree cannot bear bad fruit (Matthew 7:18). The tree that is burned (Matthew 7:19) is not called a "good" tree.

16. If a person has the faith that is willing to work, but it never does, though he lives for 40 years after having willing to work faith, is that person saved or lost?

Revelation 22:18,19 talks about those who **add to** or **subtract from** the book. Is it possible for one who is a Christian, one who has experienced the faith that is willing to work, to subtract from the book of Revelation?

**Reply:** A person who has the type of faith that is willing to work does do work. Works are the evidence of true faith. It's impossible for a Christian not to do works during his life on earth (unless he died or became mentally ill the moment after he embraces saving faith). In dealing with Revelation 22:18,19 I say that it is not possible for a Christian to subtract from the book. The tree of life was originally in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9). Adam could have eaten of the tree of life, but he "willfully sinned" by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God took away Adam's part from the tree of life; Adam died spiritually when he willfully sinned (Genesis 3:3). Due to Adam's sin we are born with a desire to sin and a will that is not free; we're born spiritually dead (Romans 5:12,18-19; Ephesians 2:1). The tree of life is now available to all lost folks because of Christ's atoning

death. The lost folks lose their part from the tree of life (Revelation 22:10) when they “willfully sin” (Hebrews 10:26) during the time when they are under conviction and have received the knowledge of the truth. The sin is considered “willful” because it is the only time in their lives that they really have free will to choose not to sin. (They’re not slaves to sin during that transitional phase).

17. Can one who is a Christian, one who has experienced the faith that is willing to work, “*crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh*” and continue to do so till the day he dies, never confess any wrong doing and still go to heaven?

**Reply:** The lost people who “*crucify to themselves the Son of God*” have already “*fallen away*” (aorist participle) (Hebrews 6:6). By spitting out the gospel after tasting it they have trampled Jesus and insulted the Spirit who by grace has offered them the free gift of salvation (Hebrews 10:29).

18. Do you agree with the Baptist preacher, J. Frank Norris, that all the sins of the Bible, no matter how many, how long they are practiced, nor whether one repents of them or not will condemn the Christian and cause his soul to be lost?

**Reply:** Christians cannot lose their salvation. The only sin of a lost person that cannot be forgiven is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.

19. If you do not agree with J. Frank Norris, do you believe he was guilty of adding to God’s word or subtracting from it?

**Reply:** You may have left out the word “not” before the word “condemn” in question 18. The way the question is written, it sounds like you’re saying that J. Frank Norris believed that any sin could send a Christian to hell. Maybe you meant to put the words “none of” instead of “all” in front of the words “the sins.” If you’ll clarify question 18, then I’ll answer it and question 19. The adding and subtracting phrase in verses 18 and 19 were referring to “*the book of this prophecy.*” That warning would seem to be referring to a willful distortion of the Book of Revelation, not an accidental misinterpretation. I haven’t met any living human being who could perfectly interpret the Book of Revelation.

20. If you do not agree with J. Frank Norris, do you believe he was a false teacher?

**Reply:** J. Frank Norris left the Southern Baptist Convention. I haven’t studied his teachings.

21. May one teach Christians that they may commit adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, die in such sins without repentance, and still go to heaven, and the teacher himself will also go to heaven?

**Reply:** I don’t believe true Christians will commit such sins unless they become mentally ill. I don’t think God holds mentally ill people accountable for their sins committed during the illness. The situation is similar to that of babies dying in infancy. God doesn’t hold infants accountable. Jesus asked His Father to keep His true disciples safe (John 17:11-15).

22. Jesus’ blood continues to cleanse the Christian who continues to seek after Him, but will Jesus’ blood continue to cleanse the Christian who rejects that blood?

**Reply:** I believe that true Christians continue along the road of discipleship and seek after Jesus; they don’t reject His blood.

23. If one is IN faith (the faith that is willing to work), but draws back from that faith into perdition, is that person going to heaven?

**Reply:** I don’t believe a true Christian draws back from true faith.

24. If the book of Hebrews is written to Christians, those who have experienced the faith that is willing to work, why does the writer warn them about falling away **IF** such a thing is impossible to do?

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**Reply:** The writer is not warning true Christians; he's warning tasters.

25. Are those who "*were made partakers of the Holy Ghost*" but crucify Jesus "*afresh*" going to heaven as long as they keep crucifying Jesus?

**Reply:** Non-Christian tasters who try to crucify Jesus again will not go to heaven. They partook of the Holy Spirit when they tasted Him, but they spit Him out and insulted (blasphemed) Him.

## Questions For Ray Hawk

1. If Hebrews 6:4-6 refers to Christians losing their salvation, then how can they ever be saved again if it's impossible to renew them to repentance?

**Reply:** The renewal takes place when they stop crucifying and putting Jesus to an open shame (Hebrews 6:6), and repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:13-24; James 5:16; I John 1:9). As long as they willingly keep on crucifying Jesus and putting him to an open shame, they cannot be restored to their former relationship. To **renew** one's repentance indicates that they had repented before. "*Easy believism*" or faith **only** does not have repentance, therefore these individuals were Christians.

2. If Hebrews 10:25-29 refers to Christians losing their salvation, then how can they ever be saved again if no sacrifice remains for their sins?

**Reply:** Those Hebrew Christians that rejected Christ as their sacrifice had done so by going back to animal sacrifices which could not bring them remission of sins because the blood of bulls and goats will not take away sins (Hebrews 10:4). To be restored they must leave Judaism the second time and return (be restored) to Christ who is the only one that can remove sins (Hebrews 10:18).

3. Does Hebrews 6:8 refer to lost people who have never been saved or to Christians who will lose or already have lost their salvation?

**Reply:** What does "*close to being cursed*" (NASV) or "*is in danger of being cursed*" (NIV) mean to you? If one is not a Christian, he is already cursed (John 3:18). One who is already cursed cannot very well be "*in danger of being cursed*" can he? These Jewish Christians had come out from under the curse (*καταρα*) of the law (Galatians 3:10). Now they have gone back to the very curse that they were redeemed from (Galatians 3:13).

4. Does II Timothy 2:25 mean that people can't repent without God's help?

6. Why is the last state worse than the first in II Peter 2:20?

**Reply:** The first state is a person who has never heard the gospel. He hears it and leaves the pollution of the world by obeying the gospel (Ephesians 1:13). Pollution (*μιασμα*) means “defilement, corruption...shameful deed, misdeed, crime” (Ardnt-Gingrich, Page 522). That’s what they escaped from by being immersed in water into Christ (Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3,4). When they fall from grace, they return to wallowing in the mire of sin from which they had been saved (Galatians 5:4). They have been washed (I Corinthians 6:11), but now they have returned to wallowing in sin just as a hog that has been washed returns to wallowing in the mire (II Peter 2:22).

7. How were people mentioned in the Old Testament saved?

**Reply:** “*Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*” (James 2:21-24).

8. How does Go<sup>1</sup> help us on the day of salvation (II Corinthians 6:2)?

**Reply:** Paul quotes Isaiah 49:8 to show that God brought Israel out of Babylonian captivity and did not forget them. God knew about the persecution the Corinthians were suffering and He would not forget them (II Corinthians 6:5-18). The persecutions would be short lived (Revelation 2:10; Matthew 24:22). God helps the Christian in the same way he helped the alien sinner to become a Christian, through teaching (I Thessalonians 4:18). II Corinthians 6:2 certainly doesn’t carry the idea that God makes it impossible for the Christian to sin (I John 1:8,10). Even you admit that Christians can backslide! A backsliding Christian isn’t producing good fruit. He is going downhill, not uphill. Therefore, it is possible for a Christian to turn his back on his teaching and return to wallowing in the mire. Since a Christian can backslide it would have been possible for Peter and Paul to become homosexual lovers. If they had backslid, as you said, they would have been lost. Conclusion: Christians who had fallen from grace.

9. Why does God have mercy on some but harden others (Romans 9:18)?

**Reply:** The answer is found in the Old Testament. God hardened the heart of Pharaoh by allowing Pharaoh to make his decisions. Pharaoh is said to have hardened his own heart (Exodus 7:13; 8:15). You can take the evidence of God’s word and either act upon it and be saved or reject it and remain lost. According to Baptist doctrine, once Pharaoh hardened his heart the first time he would not have had a chance to do so again. He would have been guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Yet, over and over again Pharaoh repented and then hardened his heart again (Exodus 8:8,25,28; 9:27,28; 10:8,16,17; 12:32). If Pharaoh had become a slave to sin and could only serve sin, it would have been impossible for him to repent over and over. He never would have changed his mind after hardening his heart the first time, if Baptist doctrine is correct.

10. Why does God make some vessels for dishonor and prepare such vessels for destruction (Romans 9:21-22)?

**Reply:** Again, one must go to the Old Testament from which Paul builds his case. Read Jeremiah 18 and you will have your answer (vv.8,10 as a starter). “*If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them...If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.*” If a vessel of dishonor repents, it becomes a vessel of honor and will not be destroyed. If a vessel of honor (such as Israel) turns from serving God to doing evil, it becomes a vessel of evil and therefore will be

destroyed. If you will remember, they were by being taken into Assyrian captivity and later the Babylonian captivity? Calvinism has used Romans 9:21,22 to teach that God elected some to be saved and others to be lost. Now, modern Calvinists want to keep a part of the original Calvinism without accepting its consequences. If Calvinism is correct, babies who die go to hell because they die with the old sin nature. Whether modern Baptists believe it or not, they must accept the consequences of their doctrine and accept the fact that all babies who die go to hell because they have no capacity to believe (accept - totally committed to) or reject the gospel and they all have original sin. I don't believe the doctrine, but those who do need to live with the consequences of the teaching.

11. Why is the gospel veiled to some people (II Corinthians 4:3)?

**Reply:** The reply is given in the next verse. *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them"* (II Corinthians 4:4). If the doctrine of once saved, always saved is true, it is true whether I understand or accept it. I am once saved, always saved and cannot be lost even though I teach what I do. On the other hand, if I am correct and you are wrong, the very teachings you have espoused in these debates will condemn you (Galatians 1:6-9; II John 9). You have been blinded by Calvin and as long as you wear Calvin's glasses, you will reject the light of the glorious gospel of Christ and keep it from shining upon you. According to Baptist doctrine, that means you have committed the unpardonable sin.

12. How do people blaspheme the Holy Spirit today, and do people that commit this sin have any chance for salvation?

**Reply:** I haven't seen anyone perform miracles, so I can't see how I could do what the Jews did in Matthew 12:10,22,24,31 and 32 to be guilty of that sin. However, Baptist doctrine states that a Christian could blaspheme the Holy Spirit and not lose his salvation. These Jews did not *"taste"* of the heavenly gift, were not made *"partakers"* of the Holy Spirit, did not *"taste"* of the good word of God, nor tasted of the powers of the world to come (Hebrews 6:4-6). They were not individuals who were **abiding IN** Jesus Christ (John 15:1-6). They were children of God under the Old Testament covenant which they and Jesus were bound by at that time. They did refuse, as **children of God**, to **taste** (your definition), and they did, as **children of God**, attribute Jesus' miracles to the devil. There is nothing in the passage which covers what you stated in your Q & A 6 A, B, or C. Here are children of God under the first testament blaspheming the Holy Spirit, not alien sinners having the Spirit to open their hearts for a short phase so they can have free will to obey or reject the **death**, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, which had not happened at the time the events in Matthew 12 took place.

13. If any type of sin condemns a lost person to hell, then does any type of sin cause a Christian to lose his salvation?

**Reply:** According to Baptist doctrine a person is lost, not because he himself willingly committed sin, but because he was **born with it**. I believe a person is born innocent (Matthew 18:3; 19:14). When that individual comes to an awareness of right and wrong and wilfully chooses to do wrong, that one sin makes him a sinner and in need of saving (Romans 3:10,23). Once that person becomes a Christian, the sin that causes him to fall from grace is the sin which causes him to reject the very one who has saved him. That's what the Hebrew Christians did (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:25-29).

14. Is it theoretically possible for a person to be saved and then lose his salvation twenty-four times in one day?

**Reply:** Not that I know of.

15. Would you baptize the person in question #14 twenty-four times in one day?



**Reply:** No (Acts 8:13-24). A person is immersed in water into Jesus Christ once (Romans 6:3,4; Galatians 3:27). When the Christian sins (backslides), he repents of his sins and confesses them (Acts 8:13-24; I John 1:7-10; James 5:16). If he refuses to do so, he remains an unfaithful child (backslider). As you pointed out in your Q & A 6B, he doesn't "want to ABIDE IN" Jesus. If one is IN Jesus, he is not outside him. If one is IN Jesus, he is saved. Look at the word "IN" found in Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3,4; II Corinthians 5:17; II Timothy 2:10, etc.). However, if he is IN him and refuses to bear fruit, he is fruitless and will later be cut off, gathered and burned (John 15:1-6). Baptists on the other hand believe one may be IN Christ, not produce fruit, not be cut off, and not ever be burned. That's not what Jesus said in John 15.

16. Can Christians snatch themselves out of God's hand (John 10:28-29)?

**Reply:** You aren't asking what John 10:28,29 states. If you will read those two verses in context with verse 27, you would see what Jesus is saying. The context of vv.27-29 is talking about sheep who hear and follow. No man can snatch that kind of sheep out of the Lord's hand. However, Baptists teach that the sheep may refuse to hear and refuse to follow and they will be blessed and as a reward for their rebellion will be sent to heaven. I don't accept that, nor does the Lord (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:25-29).

17. Can Christians take off their seal to get out of Jesus (Ephesians 1:13)?

**Reply:** Baptists believe they can grieve (4:30); despise (Hebrews 10:29), resist (Acts 7:51), quench (I Thessalonians 5:19), and blaspheme the seal (Matthew 12:32) right into eternity and God will continue to keep them sealed. I don't and neither did David when he begged God to not take away the Spirit from him (Psalm 51:11).

18. Does God quit protecting Christians (I Peter 1:5)?

**Reply:** Not as long as we have an obedient faith (I Peter 1:22). That passage says we are kept through faith. As long as our faith is obedient, we are okay. When we reject that faith as did those in Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:25-29, we give up the very thing that procures that protection.

19. Why would new creatures want to become old creatures again if "*the old things have passed away*" (II Corinthians 5:14)?

**Reply:** You have asked the wrong question. Baptists believe one may backslide (again become the old creature), remain the old creature and still be saved. I don't. I don't believe the "*old things*" that have passed away is "original sin" inherited from Adam. I inherit the consequences of his sin, but not the guilt of it. My sins are my own. I neither receive the guilt of my father's sins nor do I pass own mine to my children. There is no passage in the Bible which states that Adam had free will but we don't. If Adam, as God's child, rejected God, that would be a child of God falling from grace. If rejection of God means the unpardonable sin, Adam must have committed it and was forever lost according to Baptist doctrine.

20. If we have eternal life and have passed from death into life, then doesn't it mean that the life wasn't really eternal if we can pass back into death again (John 5:24)?

**Reply:** No. Eternal life is for the ones who hear and follow. Those who refuse to hear and follow lose what is reserved for the faithful. The word "*eternal*" shows the difference between mortal life where we die physically (Hebrews 9:27) and the type of life that is found in Christ where we will never again be separated from God as long as we abide IN Christ. Even you recognize that some who abide IN Christ can be cut off (Q & A 6B).

21. Why would God choose some people to be saved if they could lose their salvation and go to hell (II Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 1:4)?

**Reply:** Aren't you misunderstanding those passages? Calvinists believe God elected some to be saved and they were going to be saved whether they wanted it or not, while he elected others to be lost whether they wanted to be. The number cannot be changed. Therefore, some babies which die go to hell since they were not of the elect. Didn't you tell me you didn't believe that? Yet, here you are flirting with the very doctrine you rejected in your N2E, Page 9. Calvinists believe these two passages teach that God decided, before the foundation of the world, that he would save Ray Hawk and condemn Joe Nobody. That is not what these two passages teach. God decided, before the foundation of the age, that anyone who believed the truth and was immersed in water into Jesus Christ would be sanctified ones (set apart) and that such as fit that category would be holy and blameless before him (Ephesians 1:4; II Thessalonians 2:13).

22. If Christians are predestined to become conformed to the image of Jesus and if these same people will be glorified (Romans 8:29,30), then how can they not be conformed to His image and not be glorified at physical death (if losing one's salvation is possible)?

**Reply:** You misread what these passages say. One is not conformed **against his will**. You are saying that a person can reject Jesus and yet be forced to accept what he rejects. There are two classes of Christians in Romans 8. Those who are willing to be conformed will have it all. Those who are not willing will not be. "*No condemnation*" is applied to those Christians who "*walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (Romans 8:4).

23. If you say that Christians can lose their salvation, then aren't you bringing a charge against God's elect (Romans 8:33)?

**Reply:** No. Romans 8:33 is speaking of those who continue to be obedient by walking according to the Spirit, not those who reject Christ and walk according to the flesh (Romans 8:4).

24. What does it mean when God gives over people to their sin (Romans 1:24,26,28)?

**Reply:** He allowed them to continue on in their sinful way. Of course Baptists teach that a Christian could do these things, never repent, die in their sins and God would not give them up.

25. Can the people in #24 be saved after they're given over to their sin?

**Reply:** Not as long as they refuse to repent.



