

## “That’s Impossible”

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In a society of “can doers”, no one likes to hear the word “impossible” unless it is preceded by the words “nothing is.” As Christians we realize the truth of Jesus words, “with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26, Mark 10:27, Luke 18:27). Here, in context, Jesus said that the rich would not be able to enter heaven; however, if those rich people trusted in God instead of their riches, all things (eternal salvation) would be possible. In the American Standard Version of the Bible, the word “impossible” is found nine times: five times in the Synoptic Gospels (including the three verses mentioned above) and four times in the book of Hebrews. Consider the later four times that the Bible teaches us that some things are impossible.

### 1. Hebrews 6:4-6

“For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”

The word “impossible” is found in verse 6 of the ASV and verse 4 of the KJV and NKJV. No matter whether our word for study is at the first, middle, or end, the message is clear: if Christians fall away from the truth (continual aspect of sin remains in their life), then it is impossible to renew them to repentance. What a powerful message! This passage has been used time and time again to refute the Calvinistic doctrine of “preservation of the saints” or “once saved always saved. But, we need to also see how this verse serves as a warning to us. If we continue in our sin (thereby putting Him to open shame and falling from Christ), we cannot repent. In order for us to go east, we must quit heading west! If we are unwilling, it is impossible for us to be saved.

### 2. Hebrews 6:18

“...it is impossible for God to lie...”

The unchangeable nature of God is clearly seen in this fact: He cannot lie. It is not that God will not lie, but He cannot (cf. Titus 1:2, Numbers 23:19). It is against His very nature. What trust, what comfort, what refuge, what faith Christians can take in this reality. The promises of God are steadfast and will endure. He has been tried and tested, yet His words remain true. Although the comfort in this passage is great for the child of God, the warning is just as clear for those not right in God’s sight. Concerning hell, damnation, weeping and gnashing of teeth, God cannot lie.

### 3. Hebrews 10:4

“For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.”

While the sacrificial system of the Levitical law had pacified God, it had only done so because of the coming sacrifice of Jesus. The blood of bulls and goats can never pay the redemption price for the sins of mankind. God instituted a sacrificial system as a type of the ultimate sacrifice paid by the Word of God Himself when the fullness of time was come. The blessings of this verse are clear: we live under the better covenant with a better sacrifice, and we have full revelation concerning this matter. However, the warning is equally clear: do not look to the Old Law for justification (Heb. 1:1-2), or anywhere else for salvation than Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).

### 4. Hebrews 11:6

“Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that seek after him.”

When we pull verses and phrases out of their context (wresting the scriptures), they can become scary: “it is impossible to please God.” However, that is the situation only when one does not have faith. Therefore, with faith it is possible to please God. Faith consists of believing in God and the promises which he has given concerning the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:19), eternal life (Titus 1:2), the second coming (Titus 2:13) and others; but faith is more than mental acknowledgement (Jas. 2:14-26). To understand faith, read Hebrews 11. The words “by faith” will be immediately followed by action verbs (cf. Hebrews 11:4,5,7,8,9,11,17,20,21,22,23,24,27,28,31). The faith that saves is the faith that obeys! The teaching of impossibilities from Hebrews is both a comfort and a warning on all accounts. It is impossible to find salvation outside of the blood of Christ (cf. 10:4). It is impossible to please God without faith (11:6). It is impossible to repent if we do not stop our sinful ways (6:4-6). In all of these things, and in the comforting knowledge that we can seek Christ for salvation through faith being willing to repent and remain in the light once we have been saved, it is impossible for God to lie (6:18).