

Heidelberg Catechism Q87- Church Members who will go to hell!

TSK, Handfuls, Van Bruggen, HebrewLexicon, GreekLexicon, Visscher,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: What would you say if someone says he believes in Jesus Christ, is even a member of the church, but does not show that he is a Christian by his life? Today you will hear what God says about that person. God says that he will send those hypocrites to hell. To explain this,

Our headings will be: **1. Why will God Send church members who are hypocrites to hell?**
2. Examples of God condemning hypocrites in the church to hell!

Our goals are: **That because you have true salvation and true faith in Christ, you will show significant changes in your life, and if you don't have these changes in your life, that you will examine your life to see if you are complacent or not a Christian at all.**

Q & A 87 Can those be saved who do not turn to God from their ungrateful and impenitent ways?
A. By no means. Scripture tells us that **no unchaste person, no idolater, adulterer, thief, no covetous person, no drunkard, slanderer, robber, or the like is going to inherit the kingdom of God.**

Why will God Send Church Members who are hypocrites to Hell?

1. When church members do not have good works in their lives it is evidence that they are not truly converted. All unconverted people will go to hell.

Good works do not earn salvation – they never have and never will. That should go without saying, but unfortunately, we have to say it because of man's arrogance. He often thinks he can earn his salvation.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Yet good works are inextricably linked to salvation. Good works are a necessary consequence to your salvation. Good works are a response to salvation. Good works prove your salvation.

Ephesians 2:10 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

James 2:20 - But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

So **if you do not have good works** (worship of God and service to others) **you are not saved**, period. **All unsaved people will go to hell.**

2. This doctrine that hypocrites, fake Christians who do not do good works will go to hell is quite striking and goes against the modern popular teaching and sensibilities that you will go to heaven as long as you do the "best that you can." Have you ever heard at a funeral someone saying that the person is probably in hell? Probably not! You often hear that the person who has died is "at rest with God now." If that person who died did not trust in Jesus Christ and evidence that by good works, you should not say that that person is at rest in God's arms.

So while people might not like harsh words, the Bible teaches that hypocrites will go to hell because they are pretenders, not true believers. And God hates pretenders. Pretending is a personal insult against God; it is acting as if God had limited abilities and he doesn't know what you are thinking, and he doesn't hear what you say, and he doesn't see what you are thinking.

3. Who are these pretenders who will go to hell? An unchaste person, an idolater, an adulterer, a thief, a covetous person, a drunkard, a slanderer, a robber, or similar persons will go to hell. This is quite a unique list. Note some points:
Adulterer. Some **justify adultery as there is no "violence" in it.** But God says that adultery does cover the clothes with blood...adultery is robbery...and divorce, a consequence of adultery...is a violent act. **God will condemn to hell even those who are guilty of non-violent sins.**
Thief. He does his work in secret and thinks no one knows, – **but God will condemn those guilty of secret acts.**
Covetous. God will judge even the hearts of man and woman to see if there are good works there. So even if one were guilty of practicing covetousness in their hearts – sins that people think aren't too bad – white-collar sins, **God will condemn to hell even those who think evil.**
Drunkard. This is one who usually argues that he isn't hurting anyone else, but **God will condemn him to hell just for hurting himself.**
Slanderers. These are people who speak lies to hurt others will go to hell. **God will condemn to hell even those who**

Speak evil – not just violent people. Ask someone if someone should spend eternity in hell for slander; see what he says. God has uniquely different standards from yours. If you can't meet his standards, you go to hell.

4. Consider the Apostle Paul's expansion of the list of those who will go to hell for continuing in sinful lifestyles! And remember he said this to people in the church of Jesus Christ!

Galatians 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Sadly, **non-Christians think these practice-rs of wickedness are real Christians.** This hinders the spread of the Gospel. This is why you might hear the reason some non-believers don't want to come to church: I don't want to be there because there are too many hypocrites there. Since 85% of people who become Christians come through personal contacts, you can see how hypocrisy can hinder them coming into the kingdom.

5. Of course Paul is not saying that if you are a Christian you will be perfect. He is not saying that a Christian will never sin. In fact, Paul often talked about his own struggles with sin, and how he sometimes lost the battle with sin. What he is talking about here is when people continue to live in these sinful lifestyles – like when a man continuously lives an adulterous lifestyle – like when men are addicted to alcohol and will not even try leave it – like when women are contentious on a daily basis – like when boys and girls are selfish all the time and never want anyone else to get attention from their parents! You can also see the personal struggles and sinful failures of good King David, as he wrote in Psalm 51, how he confessed in his adultery and murder to the Lord.

Examples of God Condemning hypocrites in the Church to hell

1. The Pharisees were known for having the finest speeches and fanciest clothes, but Jesus Christ condemned their pretending lifestyle. Jesus knew their hearts. Others were fooled, but not the Lord. You can't fool him either. And you must know that just as he condemned the Pharisees, he will condemn hypocrites today.

Mark 7:6 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.

Matthew 23: 4 "For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. 5 "But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. 25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

But the Lord's condemnation was not meant to be hopeless judgment.

2. There were many who attended the Corinthian church and yet did not show true change in their lives. They lived like Corinthians. (Corinth was known as a very wicked city, especially for idolatry and adultery.) So Paul made it abundantly clear that those immoral Corinthian lifestyles were in conflict with the demands of God and those who lived that way could expect hell.

1Corinthian 6:9-10 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

And just as God condemn the Corinthians he will condemn hypocrites today.

3. In Galatia, some Christians loved their freedom from the curse of the Jewish OT law, they indulged in all kinds of sins. They argued that they were saved and no longer had to care much about how they lived. They were somewhat antinomian – anti-law. Just as they were condemned, so too those who today refuse to do bow to God's law.

Galatians 5:19-21 - 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things **will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Christ freed you from the curse of the law. He did not free you from obeying the law.

4. John the Baptist pointed out to the Jews that since the Jewish leadership lived a contradictory lifestyle between talk

and obedience, they would be destroyed by the Lord. They were members of the covenant, but they had failed to live up to the terms of the covenant. So God saw and judged!

Matthew 3:10 - "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

And indeed the Jews were destroyed by Jehovah in AD70. What an amazing destruction that was!

5. The **Apostle John** showed what happens when good works are neglected. And notice again that these letters were written to church people. The murderer, (or slanderer, adulterer) who continued to live that murderous lifestyle, would not have eternal life in him. He was therefore under the eternal condemnation of God.

1 John 3: 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. 15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. 16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.v17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

6. Probably the best example to illustrate the consequence of hypocrisy is found in suckers on the vine – like the bird vines of the tropics. Hypocrites are parasitic in the sense that they enjoy the blessings of the covenant...and the communion of the saints...but they give nothing back. They hear the preaching of the Word, they have the care of the elders and deacons, but they contribute nothing to the body. They reject communion of the saints.

John 15:4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

Jesus showed the uselessness to his kingdom of those who neglect good works. They were thieves...robbing the vine of nutrients. So they were promptly clipped off and thrown into the fires of hell, just as unproductive branches are burned.

7. **But Jesus hoped that this warning and condemnation would have caused the hypocrites in the church to repent**...just as the **Apostle John hoped** that they would have repented and avoided judgment, just as **John the Baptist hoped** the Jews would have repented, just as **Jesus hoped** the Pharisees would repent, and **the Apostle Paul hoped** the Corinthians and Galatians would repent. So be careful when you feel like pronouncing God's judgment on the wicked!

Conclusion:

This lesson is simple to understand: Those who name the name of Christ and say they are Christians but neglect good works, choosing rather to live their own lifestyles, will find that they have no place in the kingdom of God. Their baptism will not save them. In other words, some church people will go to hell. God demands a change of life when you are saved. John 15: 8 "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples." God demands good works because they are proofs of faith in Christ. Hypocrites are not welcomed in heaven. Hypocrites are parasites who only draw from the source but never produce good fruits, and at the same time, hinder others from growing! No wonder the judgment is so severe.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: These are strong words about what would happen to those who neglect good works and live as hypocrites. I hope these words scare you...and then encourage...that you will eat of the Vine...the Lord Jesus Christ, digest in your heart and soul that he sacrificed his life for your life, and then produce real fruits -fruits of good works and pure worship.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, hear this warning: God sees through all your sins-even of thoughts, words, and secret actions. He will condemn you unless he accepts Jesus' condemnation on the cross as yours. Will you ask him today to save you from condemnation in hell forever?