

## Never Go Back

“Black holes” are supposedly collapsed stars, so big and dense that nothing can escape them, not even their light. They allegedly suck in all objects near them. What happens when they meet the center of the hole is unknown. Some have speculated that an object might shoot through the “hole” into another time period or another existence.

Becoming a Christian is like passing through a “black hole”. You become a new creation (II Corinthians 5:17). Returning to the old life is ludicrous. *“What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” Romans 6:1-2.*

### **Four Reasons to Never Go Back:**

#### **1. Because You Now \_\_\_\_\_(Belong) to Christ**

- a. *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” Romans 6:3.* Through baptism, we identify with Christ (Galatians 3:27; I Corinthians 10:1-2). We cannot return to sin with we are truly saved, for Jesus cannot live in sin.
- b. One who professes Christ, but continues to live in sin cannot possibly be a true Christian. *“They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us.” I John 2:19.* They are counterfeits (I John 1:6; 2:4,6). *“We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin.” I John 5:18.*
- c. A magnificent change occurs to the true Christian. *“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.” Ezekiel 36:26.* The old life of sin has been washed away and left behind (I Corinthians 6:9-11).

#### **2. Because You Have \_\_\_\_\_(Buried) Your Past**

- a. *“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death.” Romans 6:4.* Returning to a life of sin is repulsive to the true Christian (Romans 6:6). Sin does bring pleasure *“for a short time” (Hebrews 10:25)*, but it ultimately enslaves and destroys us, as the lives of John Belushi (1949-1982) and Chris Farley (1964-1997) exemplify.
- b. Every believer continues to battle sin after their conversion. *“Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.” Hebrews 12:1.* Early Christians identified seven deadly sins (pride, envy, anger, gluttony, lust, greed, and sloth). Overcoming sin is warfare, requiring effort (II Peter 1:5) and work (Philippians 2:12).

#### **3. Because You Are \_\_\_\_\_(Blessed) With New Life in Christ**

- a. *“Just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.” Romans 6:4-5.*
- b. A new believer receives a new heart, a new spirit, and a new song, becoming a new creation and a new creature with a new self (Ezekiel 36:26; 18:31; Psalm 40:3; Revelation 2:17; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:24).
- c. Pornographer Larry Flynt claimed to become a Christian in 1977, but he kept right on publishing *Hustler*, never missing a single issue. *“If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.” II Peter 2:20.*
- d. *“It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them, the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit’, and ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud’.” II Peter 2:21-22.*

**4. Because You Are \_\_\_\_\_ (Bound) for Glory**

- a. *“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.” Romans 6:8.* Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us in heaven and will be coming soon to take us to be with him (John 14:2-3)!

**In the movie *Risen*, a Roman soldier (Clavius) is sent to recover the dead body of Jesus. He finds many corpses, including the thieves that were crucified with Jesus, but no Jesus. Then, to his great astonishment, he meets Jesus for himself and is mesmerized. Clavius follows Jesus to Galilee and witnesses him ascending to heaven. He is permanently changed! He could never go back! How about you?**

# Discussion Questions

## Never Go Back!

1. Have you ever heard of “black holes” in space? How is becoming a Christian like going through a “black hole” into a new realm of existence? See II Corinthians 5:17. Why, according to Romans 6:1-2, is it ludicrous to consider going back to the old life?
2. Read Romans 6:1-14. What is the first reason for not going back to the old life? How is the ceremony of baptism symbolic of our new identity with Christ? What does Galatians 3:27 and I Corinthians 10:1-2 teach about baptism? Why can't we return to a life of sin if we are truly saved? What is taught in I John 2:19 about those who return to a life of sin? What is taught in I John 1:6, 2:4, 2:6, and 5:18 about counterfeit Christians? What is taught in Ezekiel 36:26 and I Corinthians 6:9-11 about what true conversion looks like?
3. Look at verse 4. What is the second reason for not going back to the old life? What is taught in Romans 6:6? Have you experienced or observed the fact that sin does give pleasure for a short time (see Hebrews 10:25)? How do the lives of John Belushi and Chris Farley demonstrate the enslavement and destruction that sin can bring? Do you have a particular sin in your life that “entangles” you frequently (see Hebrews 12:1)? What did the early church consider to be the seven deadly sins? See Proverbs 6:16-19 and Galatians 5:19-21 for lists of deadly sins given in the Scripture. Can you give an example of a sin that you have battled many times in your life? How have you learned to overcome it? What does II Peter 1:5 and Philipians 2:12 teach about battling sin?
4. Look at verses 4-5. What is the third reason for not going back to the old life? How does Ezekiel 18:31, 36:26, Psalm 40:3, Revelation 2:17, II Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, and Ephesians 4:24 portray the new life that Christ brings? Do you know of ones like Larry Flynt who claimed to become a Christian but never gave any sign of being changed? What does II Peter 2:20-22 teach about them?
5. Look at verse 8. What is the fourth reason for not going back to the old life? What is also taught in John 14:2-3? Have you seen the movie *Risen*? How was the life of Clavius changed in the movie? Why did Clavius vow to never go back? How about you? Are you ready to say that you will never go back?