

Title: SEVEN EXCEPTIONS IN THE BIBLE

Text: Psalms 127:1

Intro: Word studies are fascinating. Taking a word and looking how it is used through the Bible is a profitable study. We shall look at the word **"except"** and some of the passages where it was used in God's word. **"Except"** is used 74X in the KJB. It is a word that is relative to **"unless"** and implies fulfillment of certain conditions before a matter becomes possible. Let us examine at least seven occurrences of the word **"except"** –

1. **"EXCEPT A CORN OF WHEAT FALL INTO THE GROUND AND DIE, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit"** (John 12:24). In the context, this is a reference to Christ's death. In the Bible the dead body of the believer is likened to a seed sown in the ground (**I Cor. 15:42-44**). I look at the grave as God's garden NOT the *"final resting place"* of true believers! Observe that the humility, sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and the subsequent belief of repentant sinners in His Gospel brought forth many sons of God into glory (**John 1:12; Heb. 2:10**).

2. **"EXCEPT YE EAT THE FLESH OF THE SON OF MAN, AND DRINK HIS BLOOD, ye have no life in you"** (John 6:53). Christ was NOT promoting *cannibalism* and *vampirism*! In **John 6:32-35**, Christ said He is *"the true bread from heaven"* and the *"bread of life"* in contrast to the *Manna* the children of Israel ate in the wilderness. In the Bible the Lord and His Spirit are likened to food and water that we must take in order to partake of eternal life (**Psa. 34:8; I Cor. 12:13**).

3. **"EXCEPT YE SEE SIGNS AND WONDERS, ye will not believe"** (John 4:48). We hear people always say, *"To see is to believe,"* but the opposite is true of Bible principles – *"Believe and you will see"* (**Heb. 11:1**). The word of God emphasizes the utmost importance of faith. Faith is the foundation of man's salvation (**Eph. 2:8**). Without faith, it is impossible to live pleasing lives before the Lord (**Heb. 11:6**). People like the Israelites, who depend on signs and wonders before believing God and His word, soon forget and become double-minded and unstable after signs and miracles are gone!

4. **“EXCEPT YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL EXCEED THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven”** (Matt. 5:20). The *righteousness* of scribes and Pharisees was artificial and shallow. It was mere outward religious show based on keeping man-made traditions. Inwardly they were not spiritual. In Matt. 15 & 23, Christ exposed their hypocrisy and likened them to *whited sepulchers*. Listen to the words of an ex-Pharisee – **Rom. 10:3; Phil. 3:9**.

5. **“EXCEPT YE BE CONVERTED ... ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven”** (Matt. 18:3). This leaves out an outward form of godliness (**II Tim. 3:2**). Many who attend churches are not truly converted. To be *converted* is not joining another sect but to be truly transformed to a better or higher spiritual and moral state. For example, if you're a cheater, then stop cheating; if you're a liar, then quit lying; if you're a thief, then quit stealing; if you're a hypocrite, then quit pretending. Be childlike in humility, obedience, and submission before God!

6. **“EXCEPT YE REPENT, ye shall all likewise perish”** (Luke 13:3, 5). *Repentance* is a change of heart and mind that culminates to a changed life. To *repent* is not only to feel sorry for your sin but to turn away from your former sin and do it no more. Very few people truly repent. Some only feel guilty when they are caught in the act. True *repentance* means your whole life is now much different from before (**II Cor. 5:17**).

7. **“EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the kingdom of God”** (John 3:3). A redeemed, saved child of God is born into the spiritual family of God (**Eph. 2:19**). To **“be born of water and of the Spirit”** is to be born in the physical flesh (not water baptism) AND in the human spirit according to **John 3:5-6**. *Born-again* is not a Christian group or fellowship you join but rather it is the very condition God required so that a perishing sinner could enter God's kingdom!

Conclusion: The word *except* shows a condition. Unless the condition happens, the desired result never happens. What is the lesson for us? We have conditions which we must meet if we would be pleasing to our Lord and Saviour. Are you saved?