

CASTAWAYS

(THREE STEPS OF SPIRITUAL REGRESSION)

Scripture:

I Corinthians 9:27 Phil 2:15-16

II Peter 2:20-22

Proverbs 29:1

Genesis 6:3

Introduction

One of the biggest problems which confronts the church is the problem of maintaining its separation. The church exists in enemy territory; when it forgets this, its very existence is in danger.

The gospel is a high and holy calling; here by divine appointment, and not intended to be abused or abased. Those who forget this place themselves in the dangerous position of conspiring with the enemy and sinning against the light of the gospel which wrought their salvation. They find themselves caught in the maelstrom of spiritual degeneration and in a short time are spiritual castaways.

I. The backslider

A. God intended for salvation to be eternal

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

John 8:36

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

Galatians 5:1

1. The Spirit to be making new inroads into our life

2. The Christian to be making constant progress

B. We practice backsliding

1. People who backslide after every revival

2. People who just "can't live the Christian life"

When we stop making spiritual progress, we begin backsliding. There is no static experience--only stagnation.

BAPTISTS BELIEVE IN ETERNAL SECURITY AND LIVE AS IF NO SIN COULD CAUSE SEPARATION FROM GOD. PENTECOSTALS BELIEVE IN BACKSLIDING AND PRACTICE IT

DR. PHIL WILLIAMS

I. The backslider

C. Attitudes breed backsliding

1. Hold out faithful
2. God promises rewards to "him that overcometh"

D. Backslider worse off than one who has never heard the gospel

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.

Luke 12:48

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse than the beginning.

For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered unto them.

II Peter 2:20-21

1. Judas

- a. Member of 12 closest to Jesus
- b. Had intimate relationship with Him
- c. Attitudes produced backsliding
- d. Backsliding produced damnation

2. Ananias and Sapphira

- a. Entertained sin in thought and deed
- b. Death, physical and spiritual, resultant

The next step in this chain of spiritual regression:

II. The gospel hardened

A. Those to whom spiritual experience is commonplace

1. On them, the gospel is ineffective
2. They fear no retribution

B. America has become gospel hardened

1. Calvary has no meaning
2. Self willed, bent toward sinning

They were fully aware of God's death penalty for these Crimes, yet they went right ahead and did them anyway, and encouraged others to do them too.

Romans 1:32

Romans 16:19

II. The gospel hardened

C. Hardness brings divine judgement

He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Proverbs 29:1

1. Lot's sons-in-law

And Lot went out and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

Genesis 19:14

2. Israel

And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:

But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

II Chronicles 36:15-16

You can't pray someone into heaven, they must want God. If they harden their heart, and continually reject God, they place themselves in danger of becoming one of:

III. The spirit forsaken

A. Has gone past God's point of no return

1. Spirit withdrawn

2. Spirit has become an enemy

THESE HAVE FAILED TO MEET THE DEADLINE

III. The spirit forsaken

- A. Have gone past God's point of no return
- 2. Spirit has become an enemy

But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit: Therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.

Isaiah 63:10

- B. God will plead for a season, then withdraw His Spirit

1. Saul

- a. His self will
- b. Spirit withdrawn

But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit ...troubled him.

I Samuel 16:14

2. Ronnie Cole

- a. Had rejected God repeatedly
- b. God's spirit no longer dealt with him
- c. Wished for God to deal with him again

- 3. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.

Proverbs 1: 25-26, 28

Conclusion

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

II Peter 3:9

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.

Isaiah 55:6

Richard Fox