

Why Do We Fall Away

12-9-12

One of the most important parables in the Gospels is the one found in Mark 4, the parable of the sower and the seed. It is important in part because Jesus used it as the template for our understanding of parables and teachings. It is also of great importance because it speaks to one of the most often repeated messages of the New Testament: we can fall away.

What if this parable was interpreted as a statistic of salvation? Of course the first person does not receive the word, and was never saved. However, the next three did receive the Gospel, and did obey the commandments that made them Born Again. However, the first one believed but fall away. The second believed but bore no fruit, which Jesus elsewhere (Mark 11:13-15) tells us will cost us our salvation. Only the third one believed and survived. One out of three. If this were a statistic, it would be that 66% of people who obey the Gospel fall away. While we should not interpret that as the exact number, we should know that many, if not most, do fall away after obeying the Gospel (Matthew 7:14).

WHY? Jesus said some "have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble." He also said that for some "the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word". In other words, we die because we do not grow, or because worldliness overcomes us.

Simply put, "therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (1 Corinthians 10:12). This means YOU! You must agree that NO ONE is above falling away. In fact, we might say that if you cannot concede this, you are falling now. If you are feeling an emotion other than fear over these words, you have already fallen.

Like a sickness, there are symptoms of falling away. Attendance habits, attitude towards brethren, attitude towards worship, or worldly interests are all gauges of our condition. Like our own health care, we need to do a self exam constantly to find out if we have fallen away, Ask yourself: am I more or less of a Christian right now? Do I sacrifice worldly things to Christ? Do I sacrifice Spiritual things to the world? Do I neglect my salvation? Do I know how precious my faith is?

Jesus taught that the salvation offered us was a great treasure. Imagine finding a Rolex watch at a second hand store for a dollar. You would grab it and hold on, knowing it was a treasure. Could you imagine setting it down to like at mere bobbles or trinkets? Would you put it back and risk it being taken by another? Of course not. So it is with your salvation.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." Matthew 13:44-46