

Why We Fall Away 6-9-14 AM

1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Perhaps the most constant and common admonition of the New Testament is this: a Christian must maintain their salvation, or they will lose it. There are 47 such admonitions in the New Testament, in every single book (except Philemon). (**Matthew 5:13, Mark 13:13, Luke 8:13, John 15:2, Acts 8:13, Romans 11:20-22, Romans 13:2, I Corinthians 9:27, I Corinthians 10:12, I Corinthians 11:27, II Corinthians 13:5, Galatians 5:4, Ephesians 5:6-7, Philippians 2:12, Philippians 3:11, Colossians 1:22-23, Colossians 3:5, 1Thessalonians 3:5, 2Thessalonians 2:3, 1 Timothy 4:1, 1 Timothy 6:21, 2 Timothy 2:17, Titus 1:14, Hebrews 2:1-2, Hebrews 3:12, Hebrews 3:18-19, Hebrews 4:1, Hebrews 6:4-6, Hebrews 10:26-29, Hebrews 12:15, James 1:13-15, James 5:19, 1 Peter 1:9, 1 Peter 4:17, 2 Peter 1:10, 2 Peter 2:20 -22, 2 Peter 3:17, 1 John 2:19, 1 John 2:24, 1 John 5:16, 2 John 1:9, 3 John 9-11, Revelation 2:5, Revelation 2:10, Revelation 3:1-3, Revelation 3:10, Revelation 22:19**) These warnings consist of simple statements such as the one we started with, or complex comparisons to Old Testament images of falling away, such as the Israelites in the Wilderness, or Esau losing his blessing. They are positive, encouraging us to hold our salvation, or negative, admonishing us not to lose it.

So we then see that a great part of being a Christian is keeping salvation. As in our last lesson, we spoke about passing that on to our "little ones" we seek to raise in Christ. So how do we successfully raise ourselves and others in the Lord, that we do not lose the inheritance? Simply put, by finding out and avoiding what makes us fall, and learning to hold on to what keeps us faithful.

What causes our failing can be summed up in a word: Flees. Not the fleas that caused the great plagues of the middle ages, from which half of the world died; these "flees" are far more deadly:

"Flee sexual immorality" 1 Corinthians 6:18 (SEX)

"Flee from idolatry" 1 Corinthians 10:14 (MONEY)

"Flee from youthful lusts" 2 Timothy 2:22 (ALCOHOL/DRUGS)

Sexual immorality needs no explaining. Scripture tells us that idolatry is really covetousness (Colossians 3:5); Youthful lusts covers a wide variety of issues, but for our purpose we will reduce it to the problems around alcohol and drugs. so that we can make the following assertion: We lose a huge number of young people between the ages of 16 and 24, and most fall because of one or more of three things:

SEX

MONEY

ALCOHOL/DRUGS

The world is obsessed with all three of these things. When a young man or woman first walks into the world on their own, they are enticed by these things above all others. These are the things that cause our greatest losses, and these are things we are commanded to flee.

But is fleeing enough? Perhaps it is more important to understand that ANYONE who has ever fallen away has done so because they lost sight of the prize. If we maintain our vision on our reward, it is IMPOSSIBLE to lose our salvation (2 Peter 1:10-11). Simply stated, we MUST NOT lose sight of the reward (Ephesians 1:18, I Peter 1:3-4, Hebrews 6:13-19).

Do you want the inheritance? Then beware of "flees", and keep the anchor firm. You will not fall.