

WHY DO CHRISTIANS GO ASTRAY?

Terry Joe Kee

It is obvious to anyone who is watching that there are times when Christians go astray. There are those who will from time to time return to the world. This is not new as there were those in the first century who did this. Sometimes even entire churches have departed from the way and gone into apostasy. Even today when we convert a lost soul and bring them into Christ, there is no guarantee that they will remain faithful and always find themselves walking in the light. This should be and is alarming to every sober-minded Christian. So why does this happen?

First maybe we should notice how the Bible describes the one who goes away and returns to the world.

1. They are spiritually sick. (Isaiah 1:5,6; Matthew 9:12)
2. They are like sheep that have no shepherds. (Matthew 9:36)
3. They are separated from Christ. They are without hope and without God. (Ephesians 2:11,12)
4. They are dead because they have trespassed and sinned. (Ephesians 2:1,2)
5. They are in a worse condition than they were before they ever knew Christ and obeyed the gospel. (2 Peter 2:20-22)
6. They have become enemies to Jesus and of the cross of Christ. (Philippians 3:18,19)
7. They are treading upon Christ, dishonoring the blood shed on the cross and despitefully treating the Spirit of grace. (Hebrews 10:28-31)
8. If not reached quickly they will reach a point of no return. (Hebrews 6:4-6; Hebrews 12:14-17)

Does this scare you? Does it warn you and cause you to take a quick summary of your own soul and the direction of your life? If it doesn't, it should. What we are about is saving souls. When we have saved a soul from death, both spiritual death, but also the fear of physical death, we have done the greatest work that can be done on earth. So what happens? Why do they go back to wallowing in the mire? How can one possibly return to what he has given up and laid aside?

I doubt that anyone who goes back into the world intended to do so when he came into Christ. It is doubtful that anyone fell by the wayside because he made a sudden judgment and decision to leave the Lord. Also, it may be the case that someone who has fallen, does not even know he has fallen away and lost. So, are there signs we can look for to help keep someone from falling away? *(continued on page 3)*

So, what then are the reasons?

The parable of the sower (Luke 8:4-15), gives two basic causes associated with why one falls away. Though there are three kinds of soil that were unproductive the first, the wayside soil, illustrates those who have never obeyed the gospel. The Word for these has never found lodging in their hearts and therefore they have never been converted to Christ. However, the next two soils, the rocky and the thorny are soils that have received the seed and illustrate to us those who have obeyed the gospel. But with both, they die. The seed that fell among the rocks has no deepness of root or conviction and therefore it withers and dies. The seed which fell among the thorns was choked to death by the cares, pleasures, and riches of this world. These serve as sad reminders that some who have received the seed will still die. Just because we have received the Word and obeyed the gospel is no guarantee that we will be eternally rewarded in the final day.

However, there are some more specific ways described for some who fall away.

1. They were never taught properly *after* becoming a Christian. This may have been due to failure on their part or on the part of others. (I Peter 2:1,2; 2 Peter 1:5-11; 2 Peter 3:18; Acts 20:17-32; I Peter 5:1-6)
2. Careless Christians may have caused offenses and caused them to fall. (Matthew 18:1-7; Romans 14:13-23; I Corinthians 8:1-13; I Corinthians 10:23-33)
3. Former associates may have pulled them back into sin. (I Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; I Peter 4:1-5, 12-16)
4. The lack or the weakness of faith leaves many in jeopardy. (Hebrews 11:6)
5. Some fall away because of fear. (Matthew 26:56)
6. Sometimes social pressures lead one to go astray. (Galatians 2:11-14)
7. False teachers will and do lead some astray. (Galatians 3:1; I John 4:1; Romans 16:17,18)
8. Satan never gives up. He may even throw some special darts that attack one's weakest point. (Ephesians 6:10-17; I Peter 5:8)

If we are to be effective in saving the lost, we must be aware of the desperate conditions in which we will find them. We are better prepared to bring someone back, or to keep them from straying, if we know and keep ourselves aware of *why* they go to begin with. Let us all *rise up and build together*.

NEWS AND NOTES

“I was sick, and ye visited me...” (Matthew 25:36)

Remember in Prayer:

In Other News:

“Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.” (Hebrews 10:24)

Ukraine Missions is in need of children’s Tylenol and/or children’s Ibuprofen. There is a bucket in the foyer for us to place these in. See Myra Morris for any additional information you may need.

Men’s Breakfast will resume April 10. All the men, young and not so young, are invited to meet at 8:00 a.m. in the basement for breakfast and a short devotional.

Teachers and Parents Meeting for all teachers, co-teachers, helpers, and all parents of school age children to meet after services tonight to discuss VBS for 2021. This is an especially important meeting, and we need all teachers and parents to be present if at all possible.

Please see Scott Pratt if you are willing to help with the upkeep on the lawn this summer.

Those Privileged To Serve April 4, 2021

SUNDAY MORNING

Song Leader: Mark Wooten
Opening Prayer: Hal Baugh
Closing Prayer: Jeff Presley
Bible Reading: Logan Snyder
Preacher: Terry Joe Kee

LORD’S TABLE

Presiding: Stacy Eddleman
David Loggins Jerry Dodson
Jason Garland Carlos Wood
Donnie Gilliland Steve Stoker

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan Nichols

SUNDAY EVENING

Song Leader: Kevin Roush
Opening Prayer: Jimmie Powell
Closing Prayer: David Dye
Preacher: Terry Joe Kee

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

April 7, 2021

Song Leader: *Singing Night*
Opening Prayer: Terry Joe Kee
Closing Prayer: Reginald Read

DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER

April 7, 2021
Stacy Eddleman

NUMBERS FOR THE WEEK Week Of March 28, 2021

Sunday Bible Study	78
Sunday AM Worship	106
Sunday PM Worship	79
Wednesday Bible Study	72
Contribution	\$6245

**“The God of heaven,
he will prosper us;
therefore we his
servants will arise
and build...”
Nehemiah 2:20**

The Friend of Truth

Greensboro Road church of Christ
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72405
(870) 932-3920

“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16)

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KeeNotes

This past Lord’s Day was indeed a *Day of Exhortation*. We had such a good day with Brother Gilbert Gough. Gilbert preached three excellent sermons from the book of Nehemiah exhorting us to rise up and build. We must not and cannot allow Satan to deter us from the great work we are to be doing. There are souls to save and brethren to be restored, so let us rise up. There are more to invite and encourage to come and worship with us, so let us get busy building. If we must build from the ground up then let us take the foundation that has been laid and get busy building.

No one has the power to stop the building God has called upon us to do. We are so blessed to be surrounded by so many opportunities to reach lost souls. Let us all be looking for ways in which we can each individually help in the building up of the kingdom. We are a kingdom of victors and we must not languish as if we have been defeated. Do not let Satan get such an advantage of us.

Martha and I will be leaving Thursday for Pennsylvania and then to West Virginia for two gospel meetings. These churches need our prayers and encouragement, and we look forward to being with them again after not being able to go at all last year. Keep the brethren in Warren, PA and the brethren at the Mt. Nebo church outside Fairmont, WV in your prayers these next two weeks and beyond. We certainly are hoping to rise up and help to build momentum in those two churches as they begin to come out of this past year.

Seek to do the will of God...nothing more, nothing less and nothing else!

SHEPHERDS

Dan Nichols
Randy Oden

DEACONS

Scottie Blanchard
Jerry Dodson
Stacy Eddleman
Mike Felts
Jason Garland
Scott Pratt
Kevin Roush
Mark Wooten

MISSIONARIES

Guyana, South America
Samrit Kammanee
Micah Robertson, Montana
Warren, PA

SERVICES

SUNDAY

Classes 9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.
5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the Word of God
Romans 10:17

Believe the Word of God
John 8:24

Repent of your sins
Luke 13:3

Confess your faith in Jesus
as the Son of God
Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for the
remission of your sins
Acts 2:38

Live faithfully
Revelation 2:10

“Lift up your eyes, and
look on the fields; for they
are white already to
harvest.” (John 4:35)

**Each One Invite One
in Twenty-One**