

Attitudes & Obligations Towards The Fallen

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

- ◆ **Dealing With Spiritual Unfaithfulness (Apostasy, “Falling Back” Or “Falling Away”) Is One Of The Most Difficult Things For A Christian To Do — Particularly When The Fallen Person Is:**
 - ◆ **A Family Member (esp. if an *immediate* family member)**
 - ◆ **Close Friend / Business Associate**
 - ◆ **Long-Time Christian / Devoted Local Member**
 - ◆ **Very Influential / Knowledgeable Christian**
- ◆ **Always Sad, And Often Emotionally Devastating**

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

- ◆ **Difficult For The Faithful Christian, For He Knows The Consequences Of Unrepentant Sin:**
 - ◆ **Ezekiel 18:24** — *“But when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice and does the same abominations that the wicked person does, shall he live? None of the righteous deeds that he has done shall be remembered; for the treachery of which he is guilty and the sin he has committed, for them he shall die.”*

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Christians Also Know The Psychological Consequences Of Apostasy:

◆ **2 Peter 2:20-22** — *“For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through our Lord Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. What the true proverb says has happened to them: ‘The dog returns to his own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire.’”*

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Christians Know The Consequences With Respect To The (Mis)Treatment Of Christ:

◆ **Hebrews 6:4-6** — *“For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they shall fall away, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding Him up to contempt.”*

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

- ◆ While The Hebrews 6:4-6 Passage Shows That Restoration Is Only Possible For The Penitent Person, Faithful Brethren Still Have Duties To Them, As Demonstrated By Other Passages
- ◆ **IMPORTANT** That The Faithful **NOT FORGET ABOUT** The Unfaithful!
- ◆ Don't Dismiss Them As Permanently Lost!
- ◆ Continue To Admonish Them And Provide Compelling Examples **(2 Th. 3:15; 1 Pet. 3:1-2)**

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ **2 Samuel 12:1-7** Teaches That:

- ◆ **The Fallen Often Lose Moral Perspective And Objectivity (David)**
- ◆ **They Justify Themselves And Are Blinded By Their Condition**
- ◆ **Moral Lessons, Parables & Analogies Are Instructive, But Often Not Sufficient Alone**
- ◆ **Directness Must Often Be Used To Penetrate The Sinner's Pride — “*You are the man*” (v. 7)**

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ **Galatians 6:1** Teaches That:

- ◆ A Christian Can Be “Overtaken” (“Caught Up” *Caught Off Guard, Vine*) In A Sin — This Fact Should Be Considered By Restorers
- ◆ The Restorer Should Approach The Erring With An Attitude Of “Meekness”
- ◆ The Restorer Should Not Be Haughty, Overconfident Or Condescending (**Cp. 1 Cor. 10:12**), **BUT MERCIFUL** (**Jas. 2:13**)

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

- ◆ **James 5:19-20** Teaches That Restoration *“Saves A Soul From Death And Hides A Multitude Of Sins”*
- ◆ **Matthew 18:15-17** Contains A Special Procedure For Private Sin Against Another *{Note: This passage does not apply to ALL correction scenarios! See **Galatians 2:14**}*
- ◆ **1 Corinthians 5 & 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15 (and Matt. 18:17)** Contain Instructions For Withdrawal Of Social Interaction

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Primary Causes Of Apostasy:

◆ Persecution (Matthew 24:9-10) — *“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then **many will fall away** and betray one another and hate one another.”*

◆ False Teachers (Matt. 24:11) — *“And many false prophets will arise and **lead many astray**. And because lawlessness will be increased, the **love of many will grow cold.**”*

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Primary Causes Of Apostasy:

◆ False Teachers (Cont'd) (2 Timothy 2:16-18)

— *“But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are **upsetting the faith of some.**”*

◆ See Also **Acts 13:8; Col. 2:8**

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Primary Causes Of Apostasy:

◆ Temptation (**Luke 8:13**) — *“And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and **in time of testing (temptation) fall away.**”*

◆ Worldliness (**2 Timothy 4:10**) — *“Do your best to come to me soon. For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.”* Also **1 John 2:15-17**

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Primary Causes Of Apostasy:

- ◆ Defective Knowledge (1 John 2:18-19) —
*“Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. They **went out from us**, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.”* See Also **Matt. 22:29**

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Primary Causes Of Apostasy:

- ◆ Lack Of Spiritual Interest (**Hebrews 6:4-6**) —
*“For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then **have fallen away**, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.”*

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Primary Causes Of Apostasy:

- ◆ Forsaking Worship (Hebrews 10:24-27) —
*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. For if we go on **sinning deliberately** after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.”*

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Primary Causes Of Apostasy:

◆ Unbelief (**Hebrews 3:12-13**) — *“Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to **fall away** from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”*

◆ **Knowing The Causes Of Apostasy Can Equip Saints In Restoring The Fallen**

Attitudes And Obligations Towards The Fallen

◆ Things To Remember:

◆ **Be Spiritually Prepared** (Gal. 6:1)

◆ **"You that are spiritual" = Knowledgable In The Scriptures & Wise In Their Application**
(2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-15)

◆ **"In a spirit of meekness" = Be Humble, Not Haughty or Overbearing!**

◆ **"Considering yourself, lest you also be tempted" = Do Not Be Self-Righteous** (Matt. 5:20; 23:28; Lk. 16:15; 1 Cor. 10:12)