

In search of...



Truth & Right

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Leaving the Faith

Possibly one of the most puzzling aspects of Christianity is the conscious decision of some that have been faithful to Christ — to leave HIM and go back into the world. I have agonized over this matter for many years and have prepared many sermons to encourage faithfulness realizing that others who are now faithful may be the next to fall away. Indeed, we know that the New Testament teaches that a Christian may “fall away”, may “fall from grace”, etc. As I have considered

this matter it has become evident to me that many leave the faith for many different reasons. It is never acceptable to God to leave the faith for any reason but I know through interaction and conversation with some that have left the faith that they had reasons that they considered more important than remaining faithful. You see; many people do not seriously consider the instruction from God via the Bible as being truly important. This is a great fallacy; mankind cannot be all that

God intended for him without heeding God's instruction — Jeremiah 10:23.

The question of keeping the faith is important as the Christian's hope rests upon his faithfulness unto death — cf., Revelation 2:10, "*Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer: behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.*" (ASV) The question is also of great interest to those that are continuing faithful. The faithful are concerned about, "why do the faithful leave?" Is there something that we should have done or are we in some way responsible for their failure? Let us look at the Bible's teaching about the condition of the backslider.

First of all let us recognize that we must never become a stumbling block in the life of any Christian or anyone for that matter: Rom. 14:12-13. A stumbling block is any obstacle that we place before another that may hinder their forward progress toward godly living. God will not approve or accept those that create stumbling blocks to truth, faithfulness and unity. We must all do everything that we can to keep each other growing in the faith ...

Ephesians 4:15 -"So

then each of us shall give account of himself to God. 13Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way." NKJV

1 Corinthians 8:9-10 — "*But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak."*

Revelation 2:14 — "*But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality."* NKJV

In the second place we that are faithful have a responsibility to one another to love each other and to bear one another's burdens:

Romans 12:9-10, *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another;* ASV

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 — *Love suffereth long, (and) is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in*

unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth: but whether (there be) prophecies, they shall be done away; whether (there be) tongues, they shall cease; whether (there be) knowledge, it shall be done away.” ASV

Gal 6:2, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” ASV

In the third place the faithful are to try to restore those that turn away from the faith (i.e., backslide):

Galatians 6:1-2 –
Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ASV

Finally, whenever the faithful have been a pattern of good works, love, patience, and possess a willingness to go to the backslider and try and restore him/her to faithfulness, surely they can do nothing else. After the faithful have exhausted all avenues of Biblical instruction in their attempt to restore such a one, the faithful ones must not blame themselves for the failure of the backslider to return to the faith. The guilt for sinning and leaving the faith belongs to him who has chosen to leave the faith

and remain in the world.

CONSIDER THIS: Ezekiel 18:19-21 *The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. NKJV*

IS THE LORD WITH US?

Often when we become discouraged or lonely we wonder if anyone cares about us; that person will soon find a peace that passes human understanding {i.e. that person will become a Christian AND WILL PURSUE RIGHTEOUS THINGS; ESPECIALLY THE FAVOR OF GOD}. You will be much happier than you are today if you will become a Christian and live your remaining days in faithful service to HIM.

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