

Reaching the Weak and Erring

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Introduction: Does anyone really care?

- A. We sometime sing “Lead Me to One Soul Today.”
 - 1. “Lead me to some soul today; O teach me, Lord, just what to say; Friends of mine are lost in sin, And cannot find their way. Few there are who seem to care, And few there are who pray; Melt my heart and fill my life; Give me one soul today.”
 - 2. This is a real problem within churches. The old saying is often true “Out of sight, Out of mind.”
- B. Could you and I become more like Jesus?

If we could keep all of those who were baptized in this building that

lives in this community, this building could not hold all the people!

- A. The outline of why people fall away is given in the parable of the sower. **(Lk 8:4-15)**
 - 1. There are four soils that represent four kinds of hearts.
 - 2. The first two hearts will fall away while the third would encompass the weak. All of these will be lost. **(Jn 15:5-8)**
- B. It is possible to reach these people. **(Gal 6:1-2)**
 - 1. While we can see the need to reach those who have fallen away, do we not also see the need of helping the weak?
 - 2. Sadly brethren often react in wrong ways when a Christian stops attending. Consider these wrong attitudes.
 - a. **Anger** - Here we take it personally rather than taking the Lord's view. Rather than being angry because they have "left us" we need to be concerned that they have left the Lord! I have know some to be rude to those who fall away.
 - b. **Ignore the one** - Here some act as if nothing has happened. Likely these people are in the weak category and only react when things affect them personally.
 - c. **Excuse the one** - Some actually want to suggest that the one not attending is faithful! By trying to answer "why" the one fell away they end up justifying them.
- C. The purpose of this sermon is to get us to act like the Saviour. **(Lk 15:1-7)**

I. Why Do People Fall Away?

A. Drifting (Heb 2:1-2)

- 1. Drifting involves a series of bad choices.

2. Often there is an over-confidence. We need to wake them up.
3. Here a person has taken a light view of their salvation.

B. Isolation

1. God expects Christians in a local church to be close. **(1 Cor 12:20-27)**
2. Often a Christian has made a choice to isolate themselves. This is always a mistake.
3. When you are isolated your emotions tend to run away with you. It may be in suspicion or in guilt.
4. Where you are around Christians you have more chances of seeing straight. **(Jas 5:16)**

C. A Failure to Deal with Guilt

1. Christians often do what Judas did, give up because of an overwhelming guilt. **(Mt 27:3-5; 2 Cor 2:7,11)**
2. Here is where a faith in the foundational promises of God will rescue one. **(1 Jn 1:7-9; 2:1-2)**

D. No Direction as a Christian

1. When a Christian loses his purpose he is miserable. **(1 Cor 15:58; Phil 1:27)**
2. What are you here? What is our work together? If you are just a spectator then you are not where you need to be.
3. Many quit so they can give their time to what they really want to do.

II. How can we bring these lost ones back?

A. You must be a spiritual person! (Gal 6:1-2)

1. If you come to them to get them to come back to "us" only, then you have left the Lord out of it!
2. If you are unhappy as a Christian get your life right first. You may do more harm than good.

B. You must be willing to give of your time to be with people. (Phil 2:17)

1. Personal association over a period of time is how most are reached. While a call now and then is good, you need to come to know this individual. He needs to know that you really care.
2. This is a time consuming work. True results will take time!

III. Steps to Restoration

A. You must find an open door. (Acts 16:9)

1. Sometimes all you can do is make occasional calls and visits until the door is opened to their hearts.
2. Until that point you should not try to "break the door down." You should give those who are interested your time while waiting for an opportunity.

B. You must get an open Bible.

1. The power to change is from God's word. **(Heb 4:12-13)**
2. I recommend a study of the first principles! Often as the power of the gospel moves their hearts they will open up on other things.
3. It is not uncommon to find some misconception on some basic Bible principle.

C. You must get them to take new steps!

1. You do not want to "restore them" to the same pattern of failure.
 2. They need to be challenged to come out of their "comfort zone" and take on the challenge of becoming a disciple. **(Lk 9:23-24; 14:33)**
 3. If they could see the cross again, then their hearts can be changed. **(Gal 4:19-20)**
- D. When the church practices their collective responsibility then it is far more likely this one may be reached over time. **(2 Thess 3:14-15)**
- Conclusion:** How valuable is one soul to you?