

The Normal Christian Life

Part Two: Let Go of These Things

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Hebrews 2:1 NIV

We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

Central Truth: I am never static as a Christian. I am either growing in grace or I am going backwards! The Epistle to the Hebrews reveals five common tendencies that can get us off course. We are learning to “let go of these things.”

Key Terminology

A Maturing Christian – I trust Christ as Savior and I am increasing in conformity to the image of Christ (Know - Grow - Sow). I have a relationship of intimacy with the Father. I am growing into all things concerning Christ. The Holy Spirit is using me to invest into the lives of others. By doing these things, I am loving the Lord with all my strength and cherishing my neighbor as I my own self.

A Weak Christian - a Believer who is not growing in the faith. Defeat marks his life, but it is not necessarily the result of overt rebellion. This is essentially immaturity.

A Backslider - a Believer who is "out of fellowship" with God. He is walking in rebellion and/or disobedience.

An Apostate - one who has defected from the faith. Some Christians teach an Apostate was never saved. Others teach that an Apostate was saved, but may no longer be renewed to a place of faith. Some teach that Backsliders and Apostates are synonymous terms. Regardless of your view, Apostasy is something to avoid at all costs!

I. Attitudes and Tendencies we should let go...

A. The tendency toward “Neglect”

Hebrews 2:2-3 NIV For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.

- **Neglect essentially hinders/blocks the full flow of the Christian Life.**

B. The tendency toward “Insensitivity”

Hebrews 3:12-13 NIV See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

- **Lack of spiritual sensitivity causes us to miss divine appointments.**

C. The tendency toward an “Undisciplined Life”

Hebrews 5:12 NIV In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!

- **A lack of discipline settles for “good enough.”**

D. The tendency toward “Withdrawal”

Hebrews 10:23-25 NIV Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

- **Withdrawal takes us out of the realm of mutual encouragement, mutual awareness, and mutual service. There is great power in the concept of “one another.”**

E. The tendency toward “Apostasy”

Hebrews 10:26-31 NIV If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- **Apostasy says, “There must be other ways as acceptable as Christianity.”**

Christian Life Lessons

- 1. It doesn't matter what you are "right about" if you are "wrong about" Jesus.**

- 2. Issues of "Exclusivity" will be the battleground for the Church during the next few years.**
 - Internally: the measure of Scripture; the meaning of Scripture; the message of Scripture.
 - Externally: the definition of saved lives, sacred doctrine, and set-apart living.

- 3. The Principles of the Kingdom seem contradictory.**
 - "Counter-culture living" with a "culturally-relevant" approach. Though the portrait never changes, the frame has some flexibility.
 - Though we are "at war" on a foundational level, we wage war by practicing "opposite behavior."

- 4. Choices matter.**
 - Jesus loved him.
 - Jesus invited him.
 - But Jesus let him walk away.