

When a Christian Stops Attending

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Introduction: A Christian who neglects his faith will in time show it.

- A. A neglected faith will in time face a “moment of truth.”
 - 1. It may be a time of persecution. **(Lk 8:13; Mt 24:11-13)**
 - 2. It may be a period of drifting and “small” compromises. **(Lk 8:14; Heb 2:1)**
 - 3. Many never see the fall coming, but they should have!
- B. One of the warnings concerning a compromised faith is how one attends the assemblies of the church.
 - 1. When ones heart loses interest in the Lord he will naturally lose interest in the things of the Lord. **(Mk 8:33-37)**
 - 2. It is very possible for someone to depart from the Lord and still attend services!
 - 3. After I baptize someone I try to impress upon them the importance of attending every service. **(Jas 2:17-18)**
 - 4. Let us learn about proper attitudes towards the Lord and the assemblies of the saints.

I. He shows a disregard for his own soul

- A. One of Satan’s best weapons is to make us indifferent to urgent matters. **(2 Cor 4:3-4)**
 - 1. Sin can mess-up our thinking. We can do that which we know is wrong and in time try to justify it.
 - 2. We can partake of the wisdom of this world and arrogantly defy God Himself! **(Acts 5:38-40; 2 Pt 3:3-4)**
 - 3. Are you willingly to listen to God and follow His will? Be careful, you may be claiming to follow God while in fact be fighting Him. **(Phil 3:18-19)**
- B. The assemblies of the church are God’s arrangement for our good.
 - 1. Why does God give instructions for the assemblies? **(Heb 10:23-25)**
 - 2. It is the height of arrogance to see a God-given provision and claim that you do not need it.

II. He shows a disregard for other Christians

- A. I have never seen one forsake the assemblies of the church that first did not pull away from other Christians and become indifferent to their needs.
 - 1. What did Jesus say would characterize His followers? **(Jn 13:34-35)**
 - 2. This must involve becoming a part of the lives of others both within and without the services. **(Acts 9:26-28; Acts 1:21)**
 - 3. Many have accepted a sterile, self-centered view of the life of a Christian. It is no wonder why they dried up and failed.
- B. Consider the involvement I am to have in the lives of other Christians.
 - 1. I am to know and care for my brethren. **(1 Cor 12:23-25)**
 - 2. I am to genuinely greet them and seek their association. **(1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; Rom 12:16; Acts 2:42-47)**
 - a. In this I am not to play favorites. **(Rom 15:5-7; Jas 2:2-3)**
 - b. Are you playing favorites at this church? How long has it taken for you to greet and get to know our new members?

3. I am to correct and instruct them. (**Rom 15:14; 1 Thess 5:11; Heb 3:13**)
4. I must see my need for my brethren. (**Rom 12:5**)
5. I am to love my brethren and become their servant. (**Rom 12:10; Gal 5:13; Eph 4:2**)

- a. Are you really patient in love with your brethren?
- b. What do our tongues reveal about our hearts? Watch out for those “experts” who strongly criticize from a distance but never have lifted a finger to be involved and help the one criticized.
- c. This is a critical spirit is commonly found among those who quit attending. Who taught them this spirit?

- C. When I pull back from attending I discourage those who are working.
 1. It is a great encouragement to see those who are faithful. (**3 Jn 4**)
 2. How discouraging it is to see Christians throw it all away. (**Phil 3:18**)
 3. Often we pull back in steps. First one pulls back from things such as business meetings, teaching classes, helping with other duties. Next comes Wednesday and then Sunday Bible classes.
 4. When we pull back in any of these things we discourage! Some do it to accomplish that very thing! It is a childish punishment. (**Num 32:6-7**)

III. He shows a disregard for God

- A. One of the more unusual examples of warped thinking is seen by the “reasoning” of the one who has stopped attending.
 1. Most I have talked with will claim to still be serving God.
 2. How can you be serving God and be walking in flagrant disobedience? (**1 Jn 2:3-5**)
 3. Some of Satan’s best workers claim to know God. (**Jn 16:1-3**)
 4. Before we can repent we need to see clearly what we have done. Satan tries to minimize it but appealing to the world. (Ex. “Why have you quit the Lord?”)
- B. He has show an unwillingness to have God in his knowledge.
 1. What happens when we do not worship? (**Rom 1:21-22; 1 Cor 11:29-31**)
 2. Those who quit attending are in fact running from God.

IV. He has made a choice for his eternal destiny

- A. Those who go to heaven go there on purpose. (**Rev 2:7,11; 3:19-21**)
 1. What must we “overcome?”
 2. Many have a flawed view of the Christian life. It is a war! If we were in a real war would you come to “training camp?”
- B. We show where our hearts are by the “small choices.”
 1. We must make the commitment to attend all the services when we are baptized the same way a man commits to his wife in marriage!
 2. You should not have to decide to attend when each service comes around.
 3. Do you want to go to heaven? (**Lk 13:25-30**)

Conclusion: Where is your heart?

- A. If you have fallen short, repent and gain wisdom to overcome! (**Rev 21:7-8**)
- B. There are Christians here today that can help you! Will you let them?