

Withdrawing from Good
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Introduction: We need help to stay in the work of God.

- A. Our conversion to God was an enormous act of self-denial. **(Lk 9:23-24)**
 - 1. When you “take up the cross” you lose control.
 - 2. Your ear is attuned to a new master. **(Isa 50: 4-5)**
 - 3. Where will the Lord lead you in His work?
- B. The Lord will always lead you to work with people!
 - 1. When Peter returned to Jesus, what was repeated 3 times? **(Jn 21: 15-17)**
 - 2. What would be the badge of true discipleship? **(Jn 13: 34-35)**
 - 3. I want to warn about the dangers of any of us that may pull back from involvement with the greatest work on earth.

I. Everyone is tempted at times to pull back from good

- A. We can grow weary and tired. **(Gal 6:9; 2 Thess 3:13)**
 - 1. That is understandable! Jesus encouraged his disciples to take a moment of rest.
 - 2. Hostility of others can make us weary! **(Heb 12:3)**
 - 3. In this case the example of Jesus will lift our spirits.
 - 4. A man once had an event that did much good. After a few complaints he said: “I will never do that again.”
- B. We can be drawn into a spirit of selfishness.
 - 1. It is not selfish to make your family a priority. **(Eph 6:4)**
 - 2. You can in that priority fall into selfishness. Do you ever think about the needs of those outside your family? **(Mt 5:46-48)**
 - 3. A parent can be selfish in working with their family! Ex. The mother is upset because her image is damaged but not because her child did wrong.
- C. Our society is pushing us to withdraw.
 - 1. A recent book documents how isolated and lonely this generation is.
 - 2. We can have online “worship”, “relationships”, and have a “virtual” life on discussion boards and on the facebook network.
 - 3. In a fast food society we want our relationships fast and simple.
 - 4. Without the pressure of this generation, we have always been tempted to associate with those like us. (Married, single, wealthy, poor, race, etc.)
 - 5. Churches can let people be lonely in a crowd!

II. Our battle is to maintain a Biblical Faith

- A. We are converted to work with people. **(1 Pt 1:22)**
 - 1. If I can “see the unseen” then I will work with the people of God.
 - 2. Why are you here today? **(Heb 10:23-24)**
 - 3. Did you even think of this reason as you came to services today?
- B. The grace of God will move us out of ourselves and into the lives of others. **(Titus 2:11-14)**
 - 1. We can be good at acknowledging what God has said but reluctant to get

involved with unpredictable people.

2. We should be people that associate and help all that we meet. (**Gal 6:10**)

C. It is much easier when we have examples to follow.

(1 Cor 11:1; Acts 20:18-19)

1. How many of you have ever been in a home study? .. with a non-Christian? No wonder many churches have few conversions.
2. How many of you take advantage of an invitation into the home of other Christians? How many of you have *ever* opened your home to Christians?
3. Would you have an ear to try?

D. We must regularly take inventory about these things. (**Titus 3:8, 14**)

1. Each of us need to ask ourselves some hard questions.
2. What should we do if “gravity” is pulling us to isolation?

III. Dangers that push a Christian to withdraw from good

A. Defining spirituality by outward standards and outward “rules.”

(Lk 7:39; 18:9, 19:7)

1. In this heart men are “thrown away” because they are sinners.
2. God has warnings about improper associations (**1 Cor 15:33**) but the Pharisee had a self-centered and false concept of the work of God.

B. By failing to know yourself and your tendencies such as shyness and depression.

1. For some it is much easier to withdraw. An overwhelmed spirit will do this. (**1 Kgs 18:9-10; Psa 142:4**)
2. You can quickly or slowly withdraw. Look at the pattern of decisions you have made over the last year or 2 .
3. You can keep developing personal “rules” that push others away.
4. Isolating doctrinal positions can be taken because of the appealing result.
5. “Reading minds” and magnifying faults can give you “justification.”

IV. Learn to build your life on God’s grace

A. You can overcome the tendency to withdraw when your heart is established by grace. (**Heb 13:9**)

1. Do you remember that you have been forgiven! (**2 Pt 1:2, 9-10**)
2. Listen to yourself talk. What are you passionate about?

B. Gain joy in helping others. (**Heb 13:16**)

1. Do you realize how powerful good deeds are? (**Philemon 4-7**)
2. It is a blessing to give!

C. Doing good will open hearts to the gospel. (**1 Pt 2:15**)

1. It will also come back to bless you.
2. Please learn to do this without compulsion. (**Philemon 14**)

Conclusion: Where do you live?

A. Have we walled ourselves into a comfortable but steadily shrinking world?

B. Maybe you need the enormous change that conversion brings.