

FOLLOWING UP NEW CONVERTS
&
RESTORING THE ERRING

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Lesson 1

FOLLOWING UP NEW CONVERTS

Introduction

The Christian who has never personally won a soul to Christ has missed the height of joy in being a Christian. The Christian who understands the worth of heaven, the seriousness of being lost, and goes through carefully instructing this lost one, praying for him, and anxious about his spiritual welfare, experiences great joy when a soul is saved. No person understands the worth of the soul like the angels in heaven. Therefore, there is more joy "...in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth...than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." (Lk. 15:7) Jesus' concern for sinners brought criticism from the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus told the story of the shepherd leaving the ninety and nine to go after the one lost sheep, of the woman who looked diligently until she found the lost coin and of the father whose son was lost and was found. Jesus told how the shepherd and the woman would call their friends together after finding that which was lost and say, "rejoice with me" and how the father would joyfully receive his lost son. (Lk. 15). After the seventy had concluded their mission they "...returned again with joy..." (Lk. 10:17). You, too, will return with joy from your successful soul-saving mission.

The Affirmative Decision

Let us suppose that your prospect has just made the decision to obey the gospel. What should you do now? First of all, anticipating this, you should have made provisions for it by having the baptistry and clothes ready. Any congregation that does house to house evangelism should have the baptistry ready for use at all times. Take the subject to the nearest available and suitable place. When a woman is to be baptized, be sure to have another woman present to help her dress. You may take the subject's confession at the place where the study has been concluded, at the church building, or in the baptistry just before the baptizing. Most workers ask, "Do you believe with all of your heart that Jesus is the Son of God?" (Acts 8:36-37). Upon hearing an affirmative answer, proceed to baptize him. Most workers will say something like this just before immersing the subject, "Upon your confession of faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and for the remission of sins, I now baptize you in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit." (Mt. 28:19). This is not a prayer. It is for the benefit of the subject and the audience when there is one. While such is not essential, it does refresh the prospect's mind as to what he is doing at that very moment.

Soul-winners should do their own baptizing. Some choose to call the preacher, elder or someone else to do the baptizing, however, the writer believes that each worker should know how and thus baptize the subjects that he teaches. Heavy people and sick people are more difficult to baptize. Usually, if you ask the subject beforehand to step back with one foot and brace himself as he is being baptized, this will help. You may give the subject a handkerchief to cover his nose or instruct him to hold his nose at the time of the baptizing. Be sure to put the subject under the water even if you have to do it the second time. The condition of the sick will determine the best method to use in baptizing them. Some can be put in a chair and be baptized by two people. It may be necessary to baptize some on a stretcher and others in a portable baptistry at the hospital, nursing home or residence.

After The Baptizing

Give the subject a baptismal certificate showing the date and place of the baptism. This should be signed by the one doing the baptizing. These can be obtained in pads at any Christian bookstore. Also, give the subject a copy of the booklet "Now That I Am A Christian" or similar instructions for new Christians.* When the baptizing has taken place at a time other than during a church service, it is always appropriate to have prayer before leaving the building. Recommend a Bible class that best fits the needs of the new convert. Give him directions as to where it meets. Some congregations have a special class for new Christians. They go through a special course of study before going to another Bible class. Special courses are available for such a class. Say goodbye with a warm "See you in church."

The cottage meeting that you close is truly closed when this new Christian derives the full benefits of being a Christian, when he is happy with his decision. It is your job to look in on him within a short time and see how he is getting along. Be sure to show the five films called "Now That I Am A Christian" for new Christians. This will give you several more regular visits to the home. If for some reason you cannot get by to see him then write to him. Some congregations mail a tract a week for five weeks to each new convert. They are: Is Church Attendance Essential? How To Understand The Bible, Christian Living, Will A Man Rob God? and Personal Evangelism. Some congregations give a copy of Brownlow's *"Why I Am A Member Of The Church Of Christ."* You would like for him to become a soul-winner, therefore, you may subscribe to Personal Evangelism magazine for him.

It is important for you to keep in touch with this new Christian to keep him faithful. One of the main causes of a loss of new members is a failure to follow-up. Never forget this new Christian and help him until he grows stronger. Wise and diligent elders will visit this person soon after he obeys the gospel. Furthermore, they will find something for him to do as soon as possible. Soul-winners are often forced to be overseers of these new Christians because of the neglect of church leaders.

Immediately upon entering the church one is more likely to agree to enroll in a fundamental study course than later when his zeal has lost some of its fervor. Feel free to talk frankly with new converts about the sense of deep satisfaction one feels in being able to wield the "sword of the Spirit," effectively. The course is long enough to provide for grounding in the faith as well as ample opportunity to make new friends.

Failure to attend Bible classes or worship should be noted at once. The first absence may be justifiable, but it may also be a symptom of trouble ahead.

The church has come a long way in converting sinners. This brings rapid church growth. But until we become as devoted to keeping them as we are to winning them the church will fail to sustain its growth, many souls will needlessly be lost, and much of our effort in personal work will go down the drain.

Effective Follow-Up Procedures

1. THE NECESSITY OF FOLLOWING UP WITH THE NEW MEMBER:
 1. The responsibility of the personal worker does not stop when the prospect is baptized.
 2. A new Christian must continue to be patiently and carefully instructed.

3. Jesus told his disciples to:
 1. Teach.
 2. Baptize.
 3. Teach. (Matt. 28:19-20)
 4. It has been said that evangelism is not complete until the evangelized have become evangelists.
 5. It has been estimated that 50% of those converted to Christ fall away from the church. If the mortality rate of newly born infants was this high we would be more than alarmed.
2. THE METHOD OF FOLLOWING UP WITH THE NEW MEMBER.
1. Larger congregations should select a worker to devote most of his time in this area of work and to assume the responsibilities for it. Appoint him as director of the program.
 2. Choose workers to work with the director that are especially qualified to work in this area.
 3. As soon as the prospect is baptized assign him to one of these workers.
 1. They are responsible for the new member's teaching program after baptism. (Work closely with the one doing the initial teaching.)
 2. They are responsible for his special acceptance with the congregation.
 4. The new member's name should be placed on the visitation list immediately after baptism.
 5. The new member should be visited by the elders and evangelist also within a few days after his baptism.
 6. Immediately upon becoming a new member, the new Christian should be presented with a packet from the local congregation including:
 1. A church directory.
 2. A brochure prepared by the congregation showing:
 1. Congregational goals
 2. Congregational history
 3. Congregational plans
 4. Services to the community
 5. Major events of the year
 3. An introduction to the elders and ministers of the congregation.
 4. A questionnaire to find out the interests and abilities in service.
 5. A purpose card if the church uses this method to encourage giving.
 6. Map of the community showing where other members live.
 7. Latest bulletin and all other local publications.

8. Tracts dealing with topics that would be of special benefit to the new member (church attendance, etc.)
 9. Enrollment blank for correspondence course.
 10. List of books in the church library.
 11. List of radio and TV programs in the area.
 12. Enrollment forms for Bible school.
 13. List of brotherhood papers, magazines and book stores.
 14. Breakdown of the committees of the congregation.
 15. Letter from the elders (personally typed).
7. Each new member should be enrolled in a class for new members during the regular Sunday morning Bible school.
 1. Cover basic areas of Biblical knowledge.
 2. Material is broken into complete lessons so that others may begin the class at any time without depending on the knowledge of the previous sessions.
 3. Some more specific elements of new converts classes in the Bible study program include the following:
 1. Age levels should be considered. Children and adults should not be placed in the same class situation.
 2. Classes should continue for six months to one year. Careful evaluation should then be made before assigning new converts to advanced study groups.
 3. Questions should be encouraged and answered tactfully, some questions may need to be deferred to a later time, but none should be ignored!
 4. "Take home" records, films, and tapes should be provided in cooperation with the new converts coordinator's program.
 4. Graduate those into an advanced new members class who have some Bible knowledge and/or who learn the basics quickly.
8. Training classes for new members.
 1. In personal work
 1. 12 week Jule Miller series.
 2. End with the new member teaching a class.
 2. In service
 1. Lead publicly
 2. Worship privately
 3. Visitation program.
 9. Teach all the new members of the importance of growth.
 10. Remember this is a soul and you are doubly responsible now since you have begun

teaching it.

Summary

1. A good salesman always tries to make sure every sale stays closed.
2. The "post selling technique" is to give a brief, pointed, reassurance talk.
3. The soul-winner's task is to highlight briefly the advantages of being a Christian, the joy and satisfaction that will come to him as God blesses him in this new life.
4. This should be done as you call back on this new Christian.

The story is told of a salesman who saw his prospect very regularly until he bought an expensive piece of equipment from him. After the sale was closed and he had his money, he was not concerned about helping the purchaser learn how to use the equipment and thus make sure that the customer was happy with his decision. One consumer said, "Nine out of ten salesmen are trying to sell me something. The tenth salesman helps me to make a success out of my business." If consumers of material things feel this way, how much more then does the new Christian feel neglected when the soul-winner forgets about him after he is baptized? Therefore, your task is not merely to help someone become a Christian, but, also to help him make a success of it.

Questions For Thought

1. Discuss the possibility of a call system whereby several are called on the night a baptism is expected, then called again if the person is baptized and asked to come witness the baptism and meet the new Christian. (This might occur when the church is not meeting.)
2. Concepts of faithfulness are formed very quickly after baptism and one's enthusiasm may cool soon. Discuss the need for immediate follow up procedures and what they might be.
3. Discuss the importance of the one doing the initial teaching continuing to demonstrate an interest in the new Christian.
4. Discuss the tragedy of "dipping them and dropping them."

Lesson 2

THE NEEDS OF NEW CONVERTS

Introduction

In this lesson, we propose to examine the needs of new converts, the mechanics of a new converts program, the new converts class, and integrating the new convert into the program of the congregation.

Study

1. WHAT ARE THE BASIC NEEDS OF NEW CONVERTS?
 1. They need to know that they are loved and that they really "belong" in their new spiritual family.
 1. Becoming a Christian means a radical change for many people (I Cor. 6:9-11; I Pet. 4:1-6); hence; they need the constant assurance that they are loved and forgiven by both God and man.
 2. Lydia seemed to feel this need when she was baptized. (Acts 16:15).
 3. All the saints need love and encouragement. (Heb. 13:1; Jno. 3:13-18).
 2. They need to understand that they have been "born again".
 1. They need to see the spiritual birth as illustrated by the physical birth (Jno. 3:1-8; I Cor. 4:15; I Pet. 1:22-23).
 2. They need to know that they are indeed "new creatures". (Rom. 6:1-4; II Cor. 5:17).
 3. They need to understand that they are partakers of a new, "divine nature", (II Pet. 1:1-11).
 4. They need to understand God as their Father (Rom. 5:12-16) and that their worship and service to him should be an expression of love and gratitude. (cf. I Jno. 4:8).
 5. They need the assurance that God will hear their prayers if in harmony with his will. (I Jno. 5:14-15).
 6. They need to know that their bodies are the temple of God and that they are His redeemed possession. (Acts 17:24-25; I Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19-20).
 3. They need help in learning how to "handle aright" the word.
 1. Basic instruction should be given on the Old and New Testament, the division of the Testaments; how to find Scripture references (each one should be introduced to the use of a Bible Dictionary and a concordance), basic principles of interpretation and how Bible authority is established.
 2. Also, such subjects as worship, daily living, study habits, personal purity, accepting responsibilities, meeting temptation, and continual Christian growth should be thoroughly covered.
 3. Faithfulness and dependability in worship and service to God should be emphasized. (Heb. 10:24-31; I Cor. 15:58).

4. They need responsibility.
 1. They should be used as soon as possible in whatever capacity they are qualified to serve.
 2. This helps them to "identify" with the work of the Lord.
 3. They need to be encouraged to win souls. After all, a candle begins to glow as soon as it is lighted. (cf. Matt. 5:13-16). He probably knows more prospects than most other Christians.
 5. They need watchful guidance by the elders and other more mature Christians.
 1. The principal task of watching for souls belongs to the elders (Heb. 13:17), and normally it should be the young in Christ who need the greatest amount of care.
 2. Each Christian is charged with assisting their brethren who need their help. (Gal. 6:1-3; Jas. 5:19-20). Obviously the concern for new converts should be shared by all.
2. WHAT ELEMENTS SHOULD GO INTO A NEW CONVERTS PROGRAM?
1. The elders should visit the new convert immediately. If he is baptized during the assembly, each elder should be waiting to greet him as soon as the service is over. They should let him know that they are always available to assist him with any problems.
 2. The elders may want to use the "buddy system" to help watch for these souls.
 1. The coordinator should greet new converts as soon as they are baptized and introduce him to a "buddy" who will work with him during the first twelve months of his Christian life. This "buddy" should visit the home of the new convert, check on him when he is absent and help him get acquainted with other Christians. A systematic plan to see that the new convert is invited into some of the homes should be arranged.
 2. Fellowship is vital to those converted through home Bible studies. All of their ties are in the world and denominations. Read how the Jerusalem church continued steadfastly in fellowship. (Acts 2:42-47).
 3. He should coordinate the home teaching aids program and be sure that each new convert is given proper training (through such films as "Now That I'm A Christian" and/ or provided with self-teaching aids). This should begin the week following his conversion.
 4. He should arrange a "door buster". This is a period of fellowship for all new converts or other new members. Three or four couples will visit the home at a prearranged date taking light refreshments for all.
 3. The elders should provide a new converts class in the regular Bible study program and see that the very best material and instruction is made available.
 1. Ideally, the teacher of this class should be one of the elders.
 2. Jimmy Dorris tells of a New Converts Class, conducted several years ago:

Success Formula For New Members' Class (1965)

The greatest gospel meeting in the history of the West Nashville Heights church in Nashville, Tennessee, was completed in August of 1964. There were 99 responses, 48 of whom were baptized. We had worked hard in preparing for the meeting. Then Brother W. A. Bradfield of Freed-Hardeman College came and really put the icing on the cake.

Pleasant Problem:

Now we had the pleasant problem of what to do about our new converts. It was realized that our meeting success meant little if something was not done to bring these new converts into active participation in the work.

With the counsel and consent of our elders and personal work director, brother Sam Hirsbrunner, announced on the last day of our meeting that a class for our new members would start on the following Sunday morning.

I was asked to plan the new class which would include all those baptized since the first of the year. Plans would have to allow for an age spread of 10 to 60 years.

First, we had to consider the basic fact that each one in the class as a Christian had the same basic requirements to meet. Second, the difference in age, understanding, training, background, ability, and talent and that each one had to integrate himself into being a part of the congregation. With these two factors in mind, we arrived at this aim as the goal of our class. "To familiarize each one with the basic responsibilities of every Christian and to familiarize each one with the program of work being carried on by West Nashville Heights to the end that each would know and practice the basic responsibilities and that each one would find and fit himself into these works most commensurate with his means to participate."

Our next order of business was how to arrive at this goal. Here is what we did:

- a.1. For the first few weeks the filmstrips, "Now That I'm A Christian" were shown. The filmstrips were followed each time by a question and answer period. These filmstrips are the best way in a class of this nature to teach basic Christian responsibilities.
- a.2. Our elders were brought into the class for one session so they could meet the new converts personally. Each of the elders talked to the class primarily on the responsibilities and duties of the elders and of the responsibilities, duties and relationship of the members to the elders.
- a.3. We have a seventeen-part work program. Our next procedure was to familiarize the class with this program of work. The deacons primarily handled this, our efforts in benevolence, attendance, evangelism, training classes, singing activities, and other phases of our work were presented. Particular emphasis was given to the place the new converts could fill in these activities. Those who were interested in a particular activity immediately signed up.
- a.4. Field trips were made to our Youth Hobby Shop in Nashville and by chartered bus to the Tennessee Orphan Home. The class could see firsthand some of the works we were interested in.

a.5. By way of practical application the class received and performed assignments which saw them complete some 325 jobs such as inviting people to services, collecting clothes and food for the needy, and other similar jobs.

a.6. We enjoyed a most successful picnic together at a local park.

Did all of this work? It certainly did! Class interest grew every week and the attendance average never varied more than ten during the four months of the class. Most of these people are actively engaged in our work program and are making great spiritual progress.

Yes, our meeting was indeed successful and these ingredients I have spelled out for you all add up to the greatest success formula I have ever heard of for a new converts class. (This article was taken from the *Personal Evangelism Magazine*, third quarter, 1965, p. 6).

4. The new converts should be invited to be the guest of one or more of the visitation teams at the earliest possible fellowship meeting. He should be encouraged to work with one of the teams as a partner with someone already experienced.
5. Attention should be given to integrating the new convert into the work of the local congregation.
3. All the above suggestions should be helpful in getting the new Christian integrated into his new spiritual family, however, a few other thoughts are in order:
 1. After the new Christians "graduate" from the new converts class, they should go into an "orientation" study program. In this program, they should be given a review of basic Bible doctrines and introduced to the entire program of the congregation.
 2. The orientation class should also include questionnaires to determine specific needs, talents, and interests of new Christians. Before the class is completed, each new Christian should have a personal interview with the elders so that they may better know how to watch for his soul and that he may know and appreciate the elders. (Those placing membership should also be interviewed.)
 3. After the orientation class is completed, each new convert should be given specific training to further development and spiritual maturity. This training should include classes in such areas as:
 1. Introduction to soul winning,
 2. Cottage classes,
 3. Teacher training,
 4. Leadership training, and
 5. Specific Bible textual studies.
 6. The orientation class probably should be taught by an elder or perhaps by all the elders, rotating on a systematic basis.

Summary

This lesson has been designed to give some basic insights into the needs of new converts and how they may be met.

No one should conclude that the author is suggesting anything other than a general approach to the vital work of following up new converts and leading them to spiritual maturity. It is hoped that the ideas presented here will be modified, amplified and adapted to the particular needs of the congregation and that they will assist in leading to a more effective work in bringing the young in Christ to their full potential as servants of God and winners of souls.

Questions For Thought

1. Discuss the difference in watching for the souls of those converted through cottage classes who may have had little contact with the church as compared with children who have grown up in Christian homes and have parents to help watch for their souls.
2. What are the threats to faithfulness caused by friends and relatives of the new Christians who are unsaved?
3. Discuss the importance of friendship and fellowship of Christians in the life of the new Christians. What part did fellowship have in the Jerusalem Church? (See Acts 2:42-47.)
4. Discuss the need for home edification as well as classroom training. Is it right to demand that all edification of babes and the weak be done at the church building?

Lesson 3

A NEED FORESEEN BY THE SCRIPTURES

Galatians 6:1-2

Introduction

1. Text: Galatians 6:1-2.
2. We believe the Bible not only provides an answer for every need of the church but could also foresee such need.
3. Furnished completely...every good work. II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:3.
4. Church and its work foreseen. Isa. 1:1-4; Dan. 2:44; Eph. 3:10-11.
5. Justification of heathen foreseen. Gal. 3:8.
6. Reasonable that the need to restore fallen foreseen.

Study: Man's Need Foreseen

1. MAN'S SINFUL NATURE FORESEEN:
 1. None without sin...no matter how good. Ecc. 7:20; I King 8:46; Prov. 20:9.
 2. The flesh is weak. Rom. 7:15-25.
 3. The best people sin...fall. Paul, I Cor. 9:27; I Tim. 1:15; John, I John 1:8-9; Peter, Gal. 2:11.
 4. Prone to fall - need restoring. Gal. 6:1-2; I John 2:1-3.
2. WARNING NEEDED:
 1. Take heed lest ye fall. I Cor. 10:1-12.

2. If ye do these things..."if?" II Pet. 1:5-10.
3. Unfruitful plants. Matt. 13:18-23.
4. Must endure to end. Matt. 24:13; Lk. 13:23-24; Rev. 2:10.
3. NEED TO HELP OTHERS FORESEEN:
 1. Lift one another. Ecc. 4:9-12. We are dependent creatures.
 2. Restore those overtaken. Gal. 6:1.
 3. Convert the erring brother. Jas. 5:19-20.
 4. Bear the infirmities of weak. Rom. 15:1-3.
 5. Warn and comfort. I Thess. 5:14.
 6. Our brother's keeper. Gen. 4:9; Ezek. 3:17-19.
4. OUR NEED TO BE CONCERNED FORESEEN: (Luke 15)
 1. The lost sheep. Vs. 4-7.
 2. The lost coin. Vs. 8-10.
 3. The lost boy. Vs. 11-32.
 4. Of more value than sparrows. (Matt. 10:28-31)

Summary

God, through foreknowledge of man's waywardness, provided a second law of pardon. Those that are spiritual (cf. Gal. 6:11) are charged with the responsibility, along with the elders (Heb. 13:17), to restore the erring.

Questions For Thought

1. Describe the four ways in which Paul said the scripture would completely furnish man and for what purpose.
2. Why is man prone to fall?
3. What are the seven things Peter said would keep one from falling? (cf. II Pet. 1:5-11).
4. Discuss ways that we can help keep brethren from falling, especially new converts.
5. Discuss some of Jesus' efforts to reach the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (cf. Matt. 10; Lk. 10).
6. Compare attitudes such as Cain's toward Abel, and the scribes and Pharisees toward those in sin, with that of Jesus. (cf. Matt. 9:10-13).



Lesson 4

WHY THEY TURN BACK

Hebrews 3:12-13

Introduction

1. Text: Hebrews 3:12-13
2. That people turn back into sin cannot be denied. (Review lesson one.)

3. Perhaps half of our young people or more will become lost to Christ and his church.
4. Think of those baptized about the same time you obeyed the gospel. (How many are still faithful?)
5. We need to know why they turn back to better understand how to deal with the problem.

Reasons Are Given In The Bible.

1. BECAUSE OF OFFENCE. Lk. 17:1-2
 1. Hard sayings. John 6:53-66; II Pet. 3:16
 2. When their ways are condemned. Matt. 15:12
 3. By sharp tongues. Jas. 3:1-2
 4. By practice of hypocrites. Matt. 5:13-16; Rom. 2:21-24
2. NOT BEING FULLY CONVERTED: Matt. 18:3.
 1. Peter failed the Lord. Lk. 22:31-32; Matt. 26:31-35
 2. Following a member of family or friend. Matt. 10:34-39; Lk. 14:26
 3. Lack of real conviction. Jno. 6:24-27; II Thess. 2:10-12
 4. Obeying a form...not from heart. Rom. 6:17-18; II Tim. 3:5
3. BECAUSE OF LOSS OF FAITH:
 1. This is possible. I Tim. 4:1
 2. Some in early church made shipwreck. I Tim. 1:18-20
 3. A warning is issued. Heb. 3:12-19; 4:1
 4. Do you know of someone who has lost faith? Why?
4. FOR LACK OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:
 1. All must grow or die...one of God's laws.
 2. Spiritual starvation...improper eating. I Pet. 2:2
 3. Lack of spiritual exercise. Heb. 5:14; I Tim. 4:6-8
 4. Pampered - can't endure hardships. Matt. 13:20-21
 5. Cares of world - riches choke out the word. Matt. 13:22; II Tim. 4:10
 6. Unsteadfast souls. II Pet. 2:12
5. BECAUSE WE FAIL THEM: Gal. 6:2
 1. Stop teaching too soon. Matt. 28:20
 2. Attitude of indifference. Ps. 142:4; Phil. 2:20-21
 3. Do not share joys and sorrows. Rom. 12:15; II Cor. 11:28-29
 4. Leave untended. I Pet. 5:2; Heb. 13:17
 5. Fail to consider babes, weak. I Thess. 5:14; I Cor. 3:1-2

6. Overlook need for encouragement. Rom. 1:12
7. Fail to put to work...leave empty life. Matt. 12:43-45

Summary

1. If the Bible says these are reasons then I believe them.
2. We must quit excusing self and blaming the fallen.
3. In every case the fault is with man and not with God and His plan.

Questions For Thought

1. Why do you think erring Christians have been so neglected in so many congregations?
2. Discuss several things that could be classed as "hard sayings" that would cause people to turn from Christ.
3. What can be done to both prevent and correct the problem of one not being fully converted?
4. What are some of the conditions that cause Christians to be led into error and make shipwreck of their faith (i.e. marrying out of the church)?
5. How does the problem of spiritual unemployment hinder spiritual growth and thus lead to departure from God? Are there enough jobs in the church building to keep all Christians busy?
6. Have we failed the erring if we demand that all edification be done in a regularly organized Bible class? Should our visits be merely a social call or a teaching call or both?

Lesson 5

FINDING THE LOST SHEEP

Luke 15:4

Introduction

1. Text: Luke 15:4.
2. Read or lead the song, "Bring Them In."
3. Sheep is a figure of speech: Jno. 10; Matt. 9:36; I Pet. 2:25
4. Elders as shepherds: I Pet. 5:1-4; Heb. 13:17
5. Church as the flock: Acts 20:28-29; Jno. 10:16
6. Must know the sheep...know where they are.
7. Flock must know and love those over them. I Thess. 5:12-13

Study: The Lost Sheep

1. TWO ATTITUDES CONCERNING LOST SHEEP:
 1. Little Bo Peep: A Sad Message
 1. Lost her sheep (did not say how).

2. She didn't know where to find them (this is reasonable).
 3. But — leave them alone (what else could she do?).
 4. They (sheep) will come home (perhaps tomorrow)
 5. Wagging their tails behind them (what else and where?).
2. Lost sheep of God: Lk. 15:3-7
 1. One lost — Did it lose itself? How?
 2. Where? Seeks till found.
 3. Leave the 99? Can we afford this? They will complain! But the Lord left no doubt about what was to be done.
 4. Go — do not wait for it to come home!
 5. Will wag sins in front...children behind.
 6. God's estimate of importance: Rejoicing!
2. WHERE THEY MAY BE FOUND:
 1. At home...among kin. Lk. 2:44; Jno. 1:41
 2. Attending services here: (many sign visitor cards saying they are members...but not a Christian).
 3. In denominational churches: Are they lost? Jno. 10:16
 4. On job — working beside us. Do you know about his religion?
 5. In swine pens of sin. Lk. 15:15
 6. In hospitals — funeral parlors — wedding chapels — jails.
 3. HOW GO ABOUT FINDING THEM:
 1. Go — do not wait for them to come home! Lk. 15:4
 2. Do not be ashamed to ask questions: Are you a Christian? Etc.
 3. Keep accurate class rolls — church directories. Do not drop a name too soon to improve attendance.
 4. Search old attendance records for forgotten people.
 5. Keep good records of attendance for all services. Note those who are absent.
 6. Take a religious census: Ask for church preferences.
 7. Follow through on information from visitor cards...letters from out of town asking to look up relatives.
 8. Observe information on hospital patients...wedding announcements...read obituary column.
 9. Solicit help of all members in compiling list.
 10. Check on all newcomers to city.
 11. Be a good listener. Make notes - hand in names for a central file.

12. Need director to coordinate work...keep us informed.

Summary

Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Lk. 19:10) Notice the word SEEK. It carries the very opposite meaning from waiting for the lost to seek. For if they are lost, they may not know how to find their way back. Jesus describes this attitude in a shepherd who leaves the ninety and nine to search for the lost one, and the woman who swept and searched for a lost coin, and then the joy of finding the lost as shown in a father's joy over his lost son's return (cf. Lk. 15).

Questions For Thought

1. Discuss the tendency of the church to spend all of its time and effort on the ninety and nine while ignoring the one who is lost.
2. How can we go about rescuing lost persons from the various places where they can be found, as mentioned in the lesson?
3. Has our teaching program prepared the church to be concerned and prepared to reach the lost sheep?
4. Report on what your congregation has been doing to keep records of the members and check on the erring. What steps will you take now to improve the situation, if correction is needed?
5. Are church services being conducted in other opportune places? If you are not doing this, make assignments to see if church services can be conducted in the jail, penal institutions and other places where erring members might be found.
6. Have you made a religious survey in the past twelve months? If you have not, plan one as soon as this course is finished.

Lesson 6

THE SINS OF FALLING AWAY

2 Peter 2:14, 20

Introduction

1. Text: 2 Peter 2:14 & 20.
2. Many people who fall away do not realize the extent of their sins. Some say: "I'm hurting none but myself."
3. Purpose of this lesson is to show a number of sins involved when one turns back into sin.
4. The erring must be convicted of guilt before they will repent.

Study: The Sins Of Waywardness

1. SOME OF THE SINS INVOLVED:
 1. Sin of forsaking the assembly. Heb. 10:24-31
 2. Sin of refusing to put God first. Matt. 6:33; Lk. 9:57-62
 3. Failure in denying self...love pleasure more than God. Lk. 9:23; II Tim. 3:4
 4. Refusing to remember Lord as commanded. I Cor. 11:23-30; Jno. 6:53-54
 5. Robbing God of money...by not giving. Mal. 3:8; I Cor. 16:2
 6. Waste of talent... We are responsible. Matt. 25:14-30
 7. Being against Lord and for the Devil. Matt. 12:30; Matt. 6:24
 8. Sin of lukewarmness - indifference. Rev. 3:14-19
 9. Causes God and the church to be despised. Rom. 2:21-24; II Sam. 12:14
 10. Means rejection of love of Christ. Jno. 14:15
 11. Sinful influence may cause others to be lost. Some try to take others with them. Matt. 5:13-16; Rom. 14:7; II Pet. 2:12-19
 12. Causes whole body (church) to suffer. 1 Cor. 12:26
 13. Christ is crucified again...put to shame. Heb. 6:6
2. DANGERS THAT THREATEN:
 1. May die in sins; life is uncertain - brief. Jas. 4:13-14
 2. Cannot be with Jesus. Jno. 8:21
 3. Shall not inherit kingdom of God. Gal. 5:21
 4. Conscience may become seared. I Tim. 4:2
 5. May get past feeling sense of guilt. Eph. 4:17-19
 6. May procrastinate till reach point of no return. Heb. 6:6; I Jno. 5:16
 7. The more wild oats sown the more harvest we will reap. Gal. 6:7-8

8. The fallen are in worse condition than those who have never known way. H Pet. 2:21
9. What if Jesus comes today? Will He appoint your portion with unbelievers? Will hell be your eternal home? Lk. 12:41-46; See Mk. 16:16b.

Summary

1. The sins involved should convince sinners of need to be restored.
2. The dangers shown should emphasize urgency for action.

Questions For Thought

1. Who all is affected when a Christian falls away?
2. Discuss the sad state of the backslider as shown in Heb. 6:4-6; 10:24-31; II Pet. 2:20, 22; Lk. 9:62; 11:24-26
3. How does one reach the point where it is impossible to renew him again to repentance and his latter state becomes worse than the first? (cf. Heb. 6:4-6; II Pet. 2:20-22).
4. Does the Bible teach that sudden destruction may overtake the backslider? (cf. Mt. 24:48-51).
5. How did the prodigal son's sins serve to bring about a reformation? (cf. Lk. 15).
6. Are there erring members in attendance that need to be restored? (cf. Rev. 2 & 3).

Lesson 7

CONSIDERING THYSELF

1 Timothy 4:16

Introduction

1. Text: 1 timothy 4:16
2. First - before we help others remove fault. Matt. 7:1-5
3. The work of restoring the fallen must begin with self. Gal. 6:1
4. This is true in work of elders and preachers. Acts 20:28
5. Results of our work will depend upon this. I Tim. 4:16
6. Example is often more powerful than words: Matt. 5:13-16; I Cor. 11:1.

Study: Considering Thyself

1. PREPARING THE HEART: PROPER ATTITUDES:
 1. Place self in shoes of one needing restoring. Matt. 7:12; Job 16:1-5
 2. Meditate upon own sinfulness. Phil. 3:13-15; I Tim. 1:12-16
 3. Clothe self in humility: I Pet. 5:5; Phil. 2:3.
 4. Pray for wisdom - for wayward: Jas. 1:5; I Sam. 12:23; Jas. 5:16.
 5. Purge self of any impurity: II Tim. 2:20-21.
 6. Think upon value of a soul. Matt. 16:26; I Cor. 8:11

7. Remember your success or failure may determine eternal destiny. Matt. 25:46; Jas. 5:19-20; Lk. 12:46
 8. Know that in saving others we save ourselves. Jno. 15:1-8
2. MAKING THE RIGHT APPROACH:
1. In spirit of meekness: Gal. 6:1; I Cor. 4:11; II Tim. 2:25.
 2. Through gentleness: Avoid strife - II Tim. 2:24; I Thess. 1:7-8; II Cor. 10:1.
 3. Use much patience: II Tim. 2:24; Lk. 21:16-19.
 4. They oppose self - not you. II Tim. 2:25
 5. Don't go beyond desire to learn. Jno. 16:12
 6. Avoid foolish and unlearned questions. II Tim. 2:23; Titus 3:9
 7. Let love motivate you: Jno. 15:13; I Jno. 4:20-21.
 8. Be sympathetic - ready to forgive. Jno. 8:11, 11; Matt. 6:14-15
 9. Be prepared in knowledge - apt to teach. II Tim. 2:24; II Tim. 2:15
 10. Be tactful - know HOW to answer. Col. 4:6
 11. Let God's word speak - not you. I Pet. 4:11; II Tim. 3:16-17
 12. Be a good listener — learn all you can about the person. Jno. 2:24-25
 13. Motivate others: Show fruit of spirit in your life. Gal. 5:22-23
 14. Select right time and place to teach...Be sincere. Ecc. 3:1-8

Summary

We can now better understand why Paul in Gal. 6:1 said for those who are spiritual to restore the erring. Could a lack of spirituality be why so little has been done to restore the erring? The lost may point an accusing finger at us or our families.

Our doing of physical works around the church building should not be misconstrued as spiritual works for an unbeliever could do some of those. If we are not qualified for spiritual works, it is very likely that we are not prepared to meet God.

Questions For Thought

1. What are some of the qualities that you would want the one who came to visit you to have if you were in error?
2. Should we be critical of the erring, feeling that we would never be guilty of anything of this kind? Or should we feel that the day could come when someone might need to come to us because we might be overtaken in a fault? (cf. Gal. 6:1).
3. Discuss Proverbs 15:1. Have you known of the opposite approach being used and what the results were?
4. Discuss how unavoidable misfortunes, such as sickness, death, etc., could cause discouragement, disillusionment and ultimate falling away.
5. Discuss Isaiah's prophecy of what Jesus' work was to be. (Isa. 61:1 & Lk. 4:16-21)
6. How can prayer help us in preparation of heart to restore the erring? (cf. Rom. 10:1;

Matt. 9:37, 38; Jas. 5:16).

Lesson 8

EXCUSES EXAMINED #1

Luke 14:15-24

Introduction

1. Text: Luke 14:15-24.
2. Man is prone to make excuse.
3. This is the means of satisfying the conscience for some.
4. May be able to determine attitude by excuse given.
5. Careful study of excuses may help us find answer to problem.
6. No excuse can be justified. (John 15:22)
7. Need to study HOW to answer. (Col. 4:6 & 1 Pet. 3:15)

Study: Some Excuses Offered

1. They (church members) are not friendly:
 1. I'm sorry — forgive me — let me arrange social events —get acquainted.
 2. You can help me overcome this. Prov. 18:24
2. I don't "fit-in" — Don't feel one of them: Can't dress as others:
 1. Arrange association with people with things in common.
 2. Best place to be one: Acts 10:35; Jas. 2:1-9.
3. No one ever visits me:
 1. That's why I'm here now. When would you like other visits?
 2. Do you visit many others? Who are they? Jas. 1:27; Matt. 25:31-46.
4. I don't like the preacher:
 1. Why? Doesn't he preach truth? Do you really know him?
 2. Worship God. I Cor. 2:5; I Cor. 4:1-6
5. God has turned His back on me:
 1. Why do you say this? Do you believe Bible? I Pet. 5:7.
 2. Study case of Job: Rom. 8:28; Heb. 12:5-11.
6. I know so many hypocrites in the church:
 1. Yes — Judas, Peter, many today — but do you not see some good?
 2. Are you without sin? I Jno. 1:8-9; Matt. 7:1-5.
7. I'm not living right — don't believe in being a hypocrite.
 1. We want you to make a change. Acts 8:22 (commend honesty).

2. What if you die in sin now? Jno. 8:21.
8. I don't think I have to go to church to be a Christian: I pray —read my Bible.
 1. Must one love the Lord to be saved? Jno. 14:15; Jno. 15:14.
 2. We are taught to assemble. Heb. 10:25 - Worship. Eph. 5:19; Heb. 2:12
9. My husband objects to my going to church every Sunday:
 1. Can he save you or answer for you in judgment? Matt. 10:37-38.
 2. You are expected to obey as fit in the Lord. Col. 3:18
10. My wife not interested - must go by self:
 1. Don't you want her to be a Christian? Will you win her this way?
 2. If Children - must they go alone? Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6.
11. We were faithful before moving here...have not got started:
 1. What if Christ should come now? Matt. 25:1-10; or you should die? Rev. 2:10.
 2. Let me introduce you this Sunday. You know duty if once faithful.
12. My job requires all of my time and energy:
 1. Relate story of rich man in Luke 12:16-21.
 2. Are you really happy? (1 Pet. 3:10-12)
13. Sunday is the only day I have off: we visit - enjoy recreation:
 1. Whose day is Sunday? Rev. 1:10...I know you would not steal.
 2. Discuss Hebrews 10:24-30; Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2.

Summary

Excuses are attempts to justify ones failure to absolve or remove a sense of guilt. Guilt is such an uncomfortable state that man has to either seek to justify his actions, forget them or take proper action to correct the matter. Someone has said that excuses are the skin of reason stuffed with falsehood. We need to open the skin and let the real reason pour out. God does not accept excuses; they incur the wrath of God. (cf. Matt. 22:2-7) Excuses result in self deceit. The task of the worker is to help one see his true condition, his need and the Lord's way for him to correct his spiritual state.

Questions for Thought

- 1.—Discuss the unreal excuses described in Lk. 14:15-24.
- 2.—How is carnal man often his own worst enemy?
- 3.—Do most of us readily admit our failures or seek to justify ourselves by offering excuses?
- 4.—What is God's attitude toward excuses? (cf. Matt. 22:7; Lk. 14:24).
- 5.—Why will just a social visit often fail in restoring the erring? 7. What are our excuses for failing to visit the erring?

Lesson 9

MORE EXCUSES EXAMINED #2

Matthew 22:2-7

Introduction

The person seeking to restore the fallen will find a great need for the right answers to the many excuses offered. We must not let excuses go unanswered so that the fallen will feel justified ... at the same time we must use tact so that we do not defeat our purpose. The same answer might not be given in each case.

Study: Some More Excuses Offered & More Answers Given

1.—I don't like the way the church is run:

A.—Find out if he has a hobby. Remind he may offer suggestions.

B.—Elders duty to oversee: I Pet. 5:1-3.

2.—I'm never asked to do anything: They don't need me.

A.—Have you offered? Filled out worksheet?

B.—Plenty to do: What will you do? I'll tell elders.

C.—You need God.

3.—One of the members offended me: Can't worship where he attends:

A.—Have you gone to him? Matt. 18:15-17.

B.—Your duty to worship God...not man. Matt. 4:10

4.—Children don't enjoy attending...always condemned for what they do:

A.—Was truth taught? Jno. 8:32...Have they quit school?

B.—You may be mistreating them. I Sam. 3:11-13; Eph. 6:4

5.—Attending church there was not conducive to business interest:

A.—It does cost at times. Lk. 9:23-26

B.—God can bless faithful. Matt. 6:33; Gen. 13:

6.—Wrong size church:

A.—Too big? Acts 2:41; Acts 4:4. What about schools?

B.—Too small. Matt. 18:20; Philemon 2

7.—Church is too narrow minded:

A.—On what subject? Matt. 7:13-14.

B.—Do you believe the Bible? Then...Rom. 3:3-4.

8.—Don't believe like you do any more:

A.—Why?

B.—Who made us to differ? I Cor. 4:7.

9. No one to blame but me...must work out own problems:
 A. Sometimes we need help. Gal. 6:1-2
 B. Let God help you...Christ: Jno. 15:5.
10. It's a family affair...So is the church: Matt. 12:46-50; Jno. 15:14-15.
11. I'm not important...no one cares for me:
 A. God cares...I Pet. 5:7; Christ died for you. Jno. 15:14-15.
 B. We care...that's why we are here.
12. I'm never well...Don't feel like attending church:
 A. Do you go other places?
 B. Which more important — body or soul? Matt. 10:28; III Jno. 2.
13. Too much stress on money.
 A. "I can't give like others"
 B. Yes you can. I Cor. 16:2; Lk. 21:1-4.
14. Can't give up pleasures now...plan to settle down some day:
 A. When? How long do you plan to live? Jas. 4:13-14.
 B. Moses had to give up more...yet did. Heb. 11:24-26
15. Wait till I get better...then I will come back:
 A. Is this the procedure when you are sick?
 B. Can't get better as long as you serve the devil. Rom. 6:16
16. Brother " _____ " hurt my feelings, rebuked me, "none of his business", etc.
 A. What was his motive? Gal. 4:16.
 B. Have you discussed the problem with him? Matt. 18:15-17.
17. Have been mistreated...family mistreated:
 A. Has Lord mistreated? Don't take spite on Him. Rom. 12:19
 B. Can you afford to let man stand between you and God?

Summary

When Jesus saw the multitude described in Matthew 9:36-38, who were perhaps lost sheep of the house of Israel, he had compassion for them, not contempt for them. He saw them as sheep without a shepherd. It is easy to lose patience with those continually neglecting their own salvation. We may feel like just letting them go on to hell, but their problems are many. Some are married to unbelievers who are a constant source of discouragement; some have thought it justifiable to put their jobs first. As a result they did not even attend church services when they could. Some, therefore, need to change jobs. Some church members are very blunt and critical and have injured the weak and some have had more than their share of problems and sickness. Therefore, we must be understanding and lovingly try to restore them.

Questions For Thought

1. Should we try to play down the short-comings of the church or be realistic and admit that the church is made up of a group of people with many problems who have come to Christ in an effort to overcome them? Have we in the church been unwilling to admit any sin to the fallen?
2. Discuss how we can ask probing questions to find out the real, problem when excuses are given, i.e., has someone offended you?
3. Discuss what to do about family problems that have caused members to become delinquent, i.e., marital discord.
4. How has materialism led some to drift away?
5. Should we get the two parties together when one has offended the other and try to correct the matter?
6. At what point should the elders be brought into a case in which they are not already involved?

Lesson 10

BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD

2 Corinthians 5:20

Introduction

1. Text: 2 Corinthians 5:20.
2. Reconciled defined:
 1. To restore to friendship; harmonize; to bring to agreement; settle a difference.
 2. Note: to restore.
3. Needed when brethren have no fellowship. (Matthew 5:23-24)
4. Husband and wife may need reconciliation. (1 Corinthians 7:1)
5. Sin separates man from God, hence need for reconciliation:
 1. Adam & Eve. (What destroyed relationship? Genesis 3:22-24)
 2. Israel: Separated from God. (Why? Isaiah 59:1-2)
 3. We go astray early. (Psalms 58:3 & Ecclesiastes 7:20)
6. We can only be reconciled to God through Christ: (2 Cor. 5:17-20)
 1. While we were enemies reconciled by his death. (Rom. 5:10)
 2. Christ the only mediator. (1 Tim. 2:5; an advocate, 1 John 2:1-2)
 3. He made possible our peace with God. (Eph. 2:12-16)

Study: Reconciliation Only Possible Through Christ

1. MUST BE FRIEND OF CHRIST ... Otherwise No Reconciliation. (John 15:14 & James 4:4)
 1. We must remove that which separates us from Christ.
 2. Ignorance of word: Must be taught. (John 6:44-45)
 3. Unbelief. (Hebrews 11:6 & John 8:21)
 4. Must repent. (Luke 13:3 & Acts 17:30)
 5. Confess Christ. (cf. "What hinders", Acts 8:37.)
 6. Baptism.
 1. Removes sin - that which separates man from God. (Acts 2:38 & 22:16)
 7. Having done these we are new creatures. (2 Cor. 5:17)
 1. We have peace with God IN him. (Gal. 3:27)
 2. This is how we are reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:17-20)
2. FRIENDS MAY CEASE TO BE FRIENDS:
 1. Things can come between to destroy friendship. (Matt. 5:23-24)
 2. Husbands and wives separate for cause. (1 Cor. 7:11)

3. We are married to Christ. (Rom. 7:4 & Eph. 5:23-30)
3. LET US LOOK AT SOME THINGS THAT WILL BREAK UP A MARRIAGE:
 1. Love for another, i.e. the world. (1 John 2:15)
 2. Adultery. (Mt. 19:9; cf. spiritual adultery, Jer. 3:1 -take up with other churches.)
 3. Filthiness. (Eph. 5:27 & Jas. 1:27)
 4. Desertion. (2 Pet. 2:20-22)
 5. Non-Support. (1 Timothy 5:8; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Malachi 3:8-10 & Psalms 24:1)
 6. Cruelty: maim or hurt. (Heb. 6:6)
 7. Indifference: Won't come home - Spurn love. (Heb. 10:25 & Rev. 3:16)

Summary

1. Before reconciliation, offending cause must be removed.
2. Must settle on God's terms: He is innocent - We are guilty.
3. If die separated - no hope ever - great grief. (Luke 16:2)
4. No reconciliation after death. Example: At funeral a man kissed wife he had killed - asked forgiveness.

Questions For Thought

1. Why was it necessary for God to give two laws of pardon? (cf. Acts 2:38 & 8:14-24)
2. What was the difference between Simon's sin and the sins of the church at Ephesus, Sardis and Laodicea? (Revelation 2 & 3)
3. Where does confession of a sin need to be made, privately or publicly? (cf. James 5:14-16)
4. Can one be restored in his home and then it be announced to the congregation? Consider the sick, private offenses and public offences.
5. Does church attendance, good moral living, and making a financial contribution fully constitute faithfulness? (cf. 2 Timothy 2:2, 24 & Hebrews 5:12)
6. Discuss sins of the flesh and sins of the spirit that lead men away from God. (cf. Luke 15:11-32)
7. Why does man need a mediator? How is Christ a mediator between man and God?

Lesson 11

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Jeremiah 8:22 & Luke 4:23

Introduction

1. Text: Jeremiah 8:22 and Luke 4:23.
2. Every person who has fallen, to the degree he needs to be restored, is spiritually sick.
3. Before we can be successful in restoring the fallen we must know him. Learn his case history.
4. When the wrong diagnosis is made we usually apply the wrong remedy.
 1. This can be fatal.
 2. We don't take (shouldn't take) another's medicine.

Study: Evaluation & Solutions

1. MISTAKES OFTEN MADE. (Job. 13:4)
 1. Make diagnosis without seeing or knowing person. Visit —Learn.
 2. Generalizations.
 1. We decide the source of trouble upon seeing first symptom.
 2. We are prone to jump to conclusions. Don't.
 3. Start treating a symptom or effect rather than cause.
 4. Impatient: Tell him what's wrong before listening to him.
 5. Accept excuse (patient's diagnosis) without looking for reason.
 6. Fail to gain confidence — patient will not take remedy. May not make full disclosure.
 7. Failure to show compassion — sympathy but show contempt for weak.
 8. Apply same remedy to all alike: Lazy or ignorant.
 9. Sometimes we try to treat a case that requires a specialist. Don't operate if not a surgeon. Call for help.
 10. Cause may not be apparent immediately — person may not know. Consult with others who know background.
 11. Betray confidence: Discuss private affairs with others.
 12. Use stronger medicine than needed or medicine too weak.
 13. Not long-suffering: If can't cure in one trip...Let die.
2. WHAT TREATMENT SHOULD BE USED:
 1. Depends upon why they turned back. Review Lesson 4.
 2. If offended:

1. Who is offender.
2. Determine if real or imagined.
3. If at word preached - study John 6:53-55 & Galatians 1:8-10.
4. By brother: go to him. (Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 18:15-17)
3. If not fully converted:
 1. May need to teach again. (Hebrews 5:12)
 2. Show filmstrips teaching first principles. (Use Lesson 9: "Be Ye Reconciled".)
4. If faith has been lost:
 1. Study Bible more. (Romans 10:17) Other books less.
 2. Arrange special studies in Christian Evidences.
 3. Study prophecy fulfilled.. Foreknowledge of Scriptures.
5. If overtaken by worldly cares and pleasures:
 1. Point out sins. Study Lesson Four.
 2. Show film: "The Prodigal Son".
 3. Show film: "The Day A Church Member Died."
6. If they feel Christians have failed them:
 1. Make them realize own responsibility. Have sinned.
 2. Show that you and others DO care. Demonstrate. (1 John 3:18)
 3. God Cares: Teach Lesson Five — Show film "The Way Home."
7. If weak — easily influenced for wrong:
 1. Can also be influenced for good...They need a buddy.
 2. Plan life filled with good things...set goals.
 3. Be patient — may fail again before victory is won.
8. If know they are lost and admit it — persuade. 2 Cor. 5:11
 1. Show films "Day Christ Came Again"; "Day The Books Were Opened."
 2. "The Day A Church Member Died." and "The Way Home."

Summary

When a doctor sees a patient he usually asks questions concerning his illness. The answers to those questions assist him in making a decision as to what to do for the patient. A lawyer examines a person on the witness stand by asking questions. It will be necessary to tactfully ask probing questions in order to diagnose the person's problem then have several approaches to handling this type of problem.

Questions For Thought

1. Some of the erring are yet babes, new in the faith, discuss Jesus statement in Matthew 18:3-6.

2. Discuss how that different distances into life of sin before obeying the gospel can affect one's progress as a Christian and, requires our understanding and patience.
3. Discuss Ezekiel's statement in Ezekiel 3:15.
4. Show in class some of the suggested films for restoring the erring and discuss their value. "The Day A Church Member Died," and "The Way Home" are especially designed for the erring.
5. Discuss the possible problem of some not being well taught before baptism. Should we re-teach them from the beginning?
6. Discuss the problems of the second and third hearer described in the "Parable Of The Sower" in Luke 8:4-15.
7. How can materialism affect even those of us in attendance and cause us to be unfaithful in assuming Christian responsibility?

Lesson 12

WITHDRAWING FROM THE UNGODLY

Matthew 18:15-17

Introduction

1. Text: Matthew 18:15-17.
2. Why this lesson in our study?
 1. God's way of dealing with unfaithful. (2 Thess. 3:6, commanded.)
 2. Severe action needed for some. (Jude 23).
 3. Something rarely practiced today. Why?
3. Some have wrong idea about discipline:
 1. Discuss John 8:1-11 & Matthew 13:30.
 2. What is the proper checklist to follow before administering discipline?

Study: Disfellowship

1. FROM WHOM WITHDRAW?
 1. Every brother that walks disorderly - None immune. 2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Cor. 5:12-13.
 2. Those among you - 2 Thess. 3:11 - (Must be in fellowship first). 1 Cor. 5:11.
 3. Those who engage in sinful acts. 1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Tim. 3:1-4.
 4. Those who teach error. Rom. 16:17; 2 Jno. 9:11; Tit. 3:10.
 5. Those who are contentious - troublemakers. 1 Tim. 6:3-5.
 6. Those who are idle - busy bodies. 2 Thess. 3:11-14.
 7. Those who cause division and offence. Rom. 16:17.
 8. Those who will not be admonished. Matt. 18:17.
 9. Those who walk not after tradition of Paul. 2 Thess. 3:6.
2. HOW IS SUCH ACTION DESCRIBED?
 1. A withdrawing - draw away from. 2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Tim. 6:5.
 2. Note that man - have no company. 2 Thess. 3:14.
 3. Mark and avoid them - explain. Rom. 16:17.
 4. Deliver to Satan. 1 Cor. 5:4-5; 1 Tim. 1:20.
 5. Let him be unto thee as an heathen - publican. Matt. 18:17.
 6. A rejection - Tit. 3:10 - turn away from. 2 Tim. 3:5.
 7. Not to company with - eat with. 1 Cor. 5:9-11; Eph. 5:11.
3. WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?
 1. To restore the erring:

1. By destroying flesh the spirit may be saved. 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 2:6.
2. By opening their eyes. Acts 26:18.
3. By making them ashamed. 2 Thess. 3:14.
4. By helping them learn their lesson. 1 Tim. 1:20.
5. By causing them to have greater respect for God and his church. 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 6:15-18.
6. By exposing folly of their way. 1 Tim. 3:9.
2. To preserve purity of church. Eph. 5:26-27.
 1. Lest others be corrupted. 1 Cor. 5:6-7; 1 Cor. 15:33.
 2. Lest influence lost. Matt. 5:13; 2 Cor. 3:2.
 3. Lest God fail to bless us. Josh. 7.

Summary

When Ananias and Sapphira lied about a gift made to the church, God disciplined them. God taught the church a great lesson by striking them dead. (Acts 5:1-10). The result was that great fear came upon the church. "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." (Acts 5:14; cf. 5:42). Man sees discipline as a hindrance. God gave it for the good of His cause.

Questions For Thought

1. Discuss some of our "reasons" for failing to practice church discipline, such as lack of Christian quality in the leadership, fear of not being able to pay building debt, close relatives of some of the members would have to be disciplined, would demand more of the members in trying to restore the erring than they want to do, and such like.
2. Discuss how indifference, worldliness, etc., even in some in attendance, hinders the church from doing its work. Shouldn't we try to restore these and if they will not repent, withdraw from them? Discuss the dangers of leaven within and without. I Cor. 5:6, 7; Gal. 5:9.
3. Can discipline be correctly carried out if it is merely in support of opinion rather than the scripture?
4. Discuss the meaning of I Pet. 5:3.
5. Discuss the growing problem of adulterous marriages and how to deal with them. How shall we deal with this type of case when they move from another congregation to ours?
6. What state are we in when we fail to take seriously God's charge to withdraw from those who walk disorderly?
7. Can discipline be effective if done from any other motive than love?

Lesson 13

CASTING PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

Matthew 7:6

Introduction

1. Text: Matthew 7:6.
2. A waste to give valuables to dogs or swine.
3. Who are the dogs? Compare Phil. 3:2.
 1. They are savage - do not appreciate good.
 2. Will harm person trying to help. Prov. 9:7-8; 23:9.
4. Who are the swine? Is Jesus calling men hogs?
 1. A proverb. See II Pet. 2:22.
 2. Pearls of no value to swine. Would not appreciate.

Study: Terminating Our Efforts

1. A TIME TO CEASE EFFORTS TO RESTORE FALLEN:
 1. Sometimes preachers, elders, personal workers, spend too much time with the same people who never respond.
 1. There is a time to give up and try someone who desires salvation. Mk. 6:11.
 2. God will not always strive with men.
 1. Discuss Gen. 6:3 in its context.
 3. Who were the people that God gave up as mentioned in Rom. 1:21-32?
 1. Why do you think He gave them up?
 4. Jesus had to give up on the Jews in Jerusalem. (Matthew 23:34-39)
 5. Paul and Barnabas turned from Jews to Gentiles. Acts 13:44-47.
 1. Why did they not continue their efforts to win the Jews?
 2. WHEN SHOULD WE LEAVE PEOPLE ALONE?
 1. After you have prayed, taught, and exercised all longsuffering.
 1. Not to use as an excuse to shirk duty.
 2. Cf. Gen. 6:3; 1 Pet. 3:20.
 2. When people willfully reject truth repeatedly. Matt. 7:6; II Thess. 2:10.
 3. When they prefer own way to way of Lord. Matt. 15:8-15.
 1. Close their own eyes so they cannot see.
 2. Study 2 Pet. 2:14 & Matt. 13:15.
 4. When it becomes impossible to renew one to repentance. Heb. 6:4-6.

5. When there is manifested a contempt for truth and hatred for you. Matt. 7:6.
1. To pursue drives people further away from truth.
6. When they ask you to leave them alone, we degrade the gospel by trying to force it upon men. Rev. 22:17.

Summary

There comes a time in the life of those who stray away when the kingdom is no longer a pearl of great price, or a treasure hid in a field in which he sells all and buys it. (Matt. 13:44-46). His great salvation has lost its value. (Heb. 2:2-3). His latter state is worse than the first. (II Pet. 2:20-22). And it is impossible to renew them again to repentance.

However, only God knows the heart and we are not always in a position to completely conclude when a man has reached the impossible point. Give each one your best, then if he dies unprepared your conscience will be clear. God will not hold you responsible. But do not let others be lost that could be won by spending time that is to no avail when those who know the truth have turned from it.

Questions For Thought

1. How can an erring Christian's latter state be worse than the first? (cf. 2 Peter 2:20-22).
2. Why is it impossible to renew some again to repentance? (cf. Hebrews 4-6).
3. What is the lesson of the parable in Luke 11:24-26?
4. How can we drive people further away while trying to help?
5. When are we in danger of falling? (1 Corinthians 10:12).
6. Will one's righteousness be remembered in judgment if he later falls away? (cf. Ezek. 3:20).
7. If after receiving the knowledge of our responsibility to the lost, we fail to obey God, where do we stand in His eyes? (cf. Jas. 4:17).