

## **Take Heed Lest You Fall**

*By Ron Boatwright*

There are those in the denominational world who say that you can not fall from God's grace and be lost. There are some in the Lord's church who also by their actions don't think they can fall from grace and be lost or they don't really care. They have become complacent. The Bible says, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). Satan promotes all kinds of false doctrines to keep people from obeying the gospel such as salvation by faith only and infant baptism in order to keep people lost. Those in the denominational world cannot fall from God's grace because they were never in it. They were never saved. One cannot fall from where he has never been. Only the saved who the Lord has added to His church can fall from God's grace. Satan works on the saved in the Lord's church to get us to fall from grace so we will be lost.

The Lord knows there will be some of His children who were saved but will desert Him and be lost. "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:1-2). Notice when one leaves the Lord, he allows his conscience to be seared with a hot iron. The longer he remains unfaithful the more his conscience becomes seared and the more difficult it will be for him to return.

It is sad to see brethern slide off into unfaithfulness. "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning" (2 Peter 2:20). Those in the Lord's kingdom, which is His church, who become unfaithful, will be cast into the burning fires of Hell. "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:41-42).

We must stay in Christ and remain faithful to Him if we expect to be saved. Jesus says, "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:6). Brethern will be lost "having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith" (1 Timothy 5:12). Do many people really believe that there will be a real Heaven and a real Hell? Many live as

they don't believe it. It is sad to see brethren who are faithful most of their lives, but later fall away.

How can we protect ourselves from falling away? We are to take heed to the word of God, "by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:2). We must hold on to the word of God by regular Bible study. We increase our faith by the study of God's word (Romans 10:17). We must keep God's word fresh in our minds and faithfully walk in it so we can go to Heaven. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Notice if we are to have the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all sin that we commit as a Christian, we must be both walking in the light of God's word and having fellowship with one another.

To "have fellowship one with another" we must be faithfully worshipping God with the church. This is the reason we are commanded, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching. For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation...It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:25-27, 31). We should exhort and plead with those who are about to fall away or who have fallen away.

"Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20). It is a joyful occasion to see the unfaithful restored. As long as a person is alive there is hope that he can be won back, but we must try. No one in the Lord's church is immune from falling away. "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). If we fell away we would certainly want someone to help restore us. We must do it in a spirit of meekness.

Brethren fall away because they become weak in faith and because of unbelief. "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:12-13). One who has fallen away must, "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works" (Revelation 2:5).

To protect ourselves from falling away, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall” (Hebrews 4:11). We are encouraged to, “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10). We must be diligent in our striving to go to Heaven. “Beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:17-18). We must continue to grow spiritually so we can remain faithful. If we do we are promised by the Lord, “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).