

**When somebody that belongs here is out there getting beat up by the world...we all suffer loss.**

**I know we can't repent for them, I know we can't fill their place for them...but we can love them and we can do all within our power to encourage them and pray for them and help them get back on their feet.**

**Who can tell, the one you still love and sacrifice for and pray without ceasing for...might turn out to be the one who leads your very own children or grandchildren to Christ.**

**Look around you. Who is missing that we ought to be reaching out to right now?**

**Oh sure, it's my job, I'm the Pastor...but how much more will it mean when YOU reach out and encourage them?**

## **Life at the Top Part II**

**April 2, 2017**

by C Benjamin Dill

Good morning, Lighthouse, are you ready for the Word of God this morning?

### **Galatians 6:1-10**

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

We, as a Church, have two basic areas of responsibility before the Lord.

First, we are to win the lost to Christ. This involves many things; teaching, preaching, training, various ministries that put us in positive contact with those the Lord is drawing to Himself, home missions, foreign missions and more.

Second, we are to train those we win and others whom the Lord sends here to be part of our Church to be fruitful and faithful servants of the Lord.

Over and over in ministry we see folks get saved, rejoice in their new life, begin to grow for a while and then fall back into their old life in the world.

Sometimes they are able to come back from it, sometimes not.

Sometimes older believers, saved many years, become disillusioned and decide they had rather live in the world than for Jesus.

Then, in both cases, the loss is catastrophic; both for them and for the work of the Lord.

3. Depending on the type of failure, there are still many lesser areas of service one may be restored to immediately.

**Conclusion: (Go back to chart).**

**Baptist Churches are often known as those who shoot their wounded.**

**We don't intend on being known for that here!**

**It is easier just to give up and let them go.**

**After all, 'sin has consequences and they probably deserve what they are getting'.**

**Seriously, do you really want to go there? Do you really want God to deal with us according to what any of us deserve?**

**David committed adultery and murder and God restored Him. What would our world and our lives have lost if God hadn't restored David?**

**Peter denied the Lord but God restored him. What would our world and our lives have lost if God hadn't restored Peter?**

**Some of you would likely still be lost if God hadn't restored me!**

3. This really is what restoration means.
4. Many are quick to put a lot of rules and requirements on this.
5. “Well, it depends on how bad the sin – or – it depends on the position they are being restored to – or – it depends on whose fault it is” – or – some other manufactured criteria that God didn’t specify.
6. Unless the fault is in an area that simply cannot be put back (For example; like being restored to children’s ministry after an inappropriate relationship with a child), the repentant sinner is to be forgiven and restored.
7. Even in a failure something like our example, restoration to a place in some other area of service must occur.

*B. Restoration is a process.*

1. The subject individual does not go back to teaching or preaching or being the treasurer or whatever place of service they may have held, immediately.
2. Just like what should have been required the first time, they must, with adequate time and faithfulness, **be proven**.

To help us understand and hopefully prevent a fall back into the world, the Lord has sent us an amazing illustration that allows us to see where we stand in relation to this ever-present danger.

As we review this illustration, I strongly recommend that if you missed last Sunday’s message that you go online and listen to or read Part I.

Picture a horizontal line across the center of a blank sheet of paper. Below that line your old man rules your life. Above that line your new man rules your life.

Those who constantly waver and often fall away try to live their lives just above the line.

They want just enough of Jesus to stay off drugs. They want just enough of Jesus to be blessed financially. They want just enough of Jesus to feel good spiritually, at least at times.

They live on the edge of the line.

We all sin and fail God every day; (wavy line) sometimes in ways we consider minor and sometimes in ways we consider major.

God’s advice is **get off the line and start living at the top of the page**. We call it things like “completely surrendering to the Lord”, “becoming a living sacrifice”, “giving God your all”, “sold out to Jesus”.

God calls it things like “holiness”, “sanctification”, being “fully persuaded”.

Whatever you call it, when you are living down on the line, every time you sin it takes you below the line and puts you under the control of your old man, the flesh; thus, you fall away.

When you are living way up here, “sold out to Jesus”, you can suffer even a substantial failure; but you don’t fall under the control of your flesh; you confess your sin, get right with God and still **never fall** away.

If you are living down here on the line, it’s only a matter of time before a failure takes you so low you can’t get back.

Today in Part II, we are going to expand on what we learned last week to help prevent those major failures and learn how to respond when they occur.

First, we are going to look at some of the:

### **I. Reasons believers experience major failures.**

*A. The most common reason is simply living too close to the line.*

1. For example, some of you are still maintaining close fellowship with ungodly friends.

c. Encouraging each other.

d. Providing wise council; just to name a few.

7. Ultimately, we are each responsible for our own failures.

**Galatians 6:5** For every man shall bear his own burden.

8. You can’t live someone else’s life for them but oftentimes you can BE the difference between someone standing or falling.

Then there is:

### **III. The proper response when failure occurs.**

*A. Restoration is commanded; the offender is commanded to repent and we are commanded to forgive and restore.*

1. Once a major failure occurs and that person has become repentant and willing to get things right again, the Church is commanded to restore that person.

2. “Restore” means just what it says. A nationally advertised restoration company brags that they can make it “like it never happened”.

14 Behold the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

7. When spiritual believers get close in the lives of others, they can often see what is coming and are able to help their friends through the roughest times.

*B. Bearing the burden of others fulfills the law of Christ.*

1. That would be the part about loving your neighbor as yourself.

## 2. **1 Corinthians 12:25-26**

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

3. There are many ways to bear one another's burdens:

a. Praying each other through hard times.

b. Helping with expenses.

2. **1 Corinthians 15:33** Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

3. You would be very quick to tell your kids not to hang out with the wrong crowd but some of you are still doing the same thing yourself.

4. **2 Corinthians 6:14** Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

5. Some Christians are living down on the line because they've just never stepped up yet to actually start serving the Lord.

*B. Often a major fall comes from that particular "sin that doth so easily beset us".*

1. If you have a besetting sin (and certainly we all do), it must be dealt with **before** it occurs.

2. **Romans 13:14** But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.**

3. You may need to get rid of some of those movie channels.

4. You may need to have lunch by yourself instead of in the lunch room with all the gossipers.

5. You may have to find other places to hang out where your favorite addictive substance is not available.

*C. Even when living up in the middle or toward the top of the page there are still dangers.*

1. You may find yourself serving, but with the wrong motive (the only right motive is love).
  2. Your expectations of others may be too high and you become disillusioned and disappointed in them.  
(We must cut other believers some slack, too).
  3. You may have just piled your plate so high you just get burned out; sometimes you look around and there is just no time left for yourself.
  4. You may be serving and serving and you are just not seeing any fruit for your labors.
- Galatians 6:9** And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
5. Sometimes when God calls us to higher levels of service, instead of rejoicing, we get scared and run.
  6. No matter how high on the page we think we are, danger is always close at hand.

**1 Corinthians 10:12** Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Next, let's look at:

## **II. Our responsibility to new believers and new members.**

*A. There is a lot less damage and suffering in preventing a fall than recovering from one.*

1. **Galatians 6:10** As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.
2. One of the best things you can do for new believers and members is to **become a friend**.
3. This requires allowing others into your life.
4. The Lord will create the drawing of friendships but we must be open to it and willing.
5. Being a friend and especially a mentor to some degree requires real sacrifice and cost that may not always be reciprocated.
6. Look at the attitude of love and sacrifice the Apostle Paul had toward his spiritual children and those he was mentoring.

## **2 Corinthians 12:14-15**