

COMING HOME STUDIES

For people who want to be RESTORED

1. REMAIN IN ME

- Begin with prayer (BT Shepherd to lead).
- Express your appreciation for their initiative in coming back to church. Remember, it takes courage!
- Encourage them to be open about their life.

What Led to Them Falling Away? : Discuss what led up to them falling away. Go back three months prior to their leaving the church. Draw a timeline if they are comfortable with you doing this. As you hear the situations, think of the corresponding sins and character weaknesses from the following passages: Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 4:20-5:5 and Jas. 4:17 (which you should review in advance). This is not the time to confront their sin! Rather it is a time for you to gain an understanding of their specific situation and their character. Ask questions such as:

- Who were you closest to before you left?
- What were your quiet times like?
- Is there anyone that you are unresolved with?
- When did you first start thinking about falling away?
- Did you discuss this with anyone? Were you open about your doubts?
- Ask questions that enable them to talk and be completely open. Draw them out.

Fruit of the Spirit (Read Gal. 5:22-23)

- Draw a tree on the top half of a sheet of paper, draw branches on the tree and draw nine circles (fruit) in different parts of the tree. Fill in the circles with the nine fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Remember, this is an illustration, not an artwork.)
- On the bottom half of the same sheet of paper, write down the specific sins from Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 4:20-5:5 that they mentioned pulled them away from God.

Remain in Christ (Read Jn.15:1-17)

- **“Remain in me”** - to be faithful disciples, we must remain in Jesus Christ. Discuss what this means from this passage. For example: Bible study, prayer, avoidance of sin, sharing the Gospel with others.
- **“Remain in my love”** - to overcome sin and stay grateful, we must go back to the cross often and grow in our understanding of grace.
- **“Love each other”** - to remain in the vine we must stay united with our brothers and sisters. Satan’s goal is to divide us. He sends thoughts and attitudes our direction to separate us from other disciples and destroy our unity.
- Explain that God was involved in their leaving (Jn.15:1-2, 5-6). That is, regardless of what their situation was, they did not leave God. In fact, God cut them off because of their sin (refer to the specific sins on the bottom of the page).
- Explain to them that leaving the church was just a result of them no longer being attached to the vine. Many who have left God mentioned that prior to leaving they lost their faith in God. They mentioned that they had stopped having solid quiet times and praying.
- Read Rom. 10:17 and remind them that the only way faith comes is by hearing God’s Word.

God Still Wants Them to be Saved! (Read I Tim. 2:3-4)

God is reaching out to them once again! He has not given up on them! He still has a dream for their life!

Practical Response to this Lesson:

1. Begin the Quiet Time Series
2. Pray daily using the A-C-T-S method (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication). Instruct them how to do this and if possible pray with them.

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2. REPENTANCE

I. Who Needs Repentance?

a. Luke 13:1-5

1. Everyone must repent
2. The alternative to repentance is perishing

b. Acts 26:20-21

1. Repentance = change of heart/ mind. It is a decision
2. Repentance literally means "to turn around, go a different direction."
3. Repentance is followed by deeds - your life reflects the change
4. Can be done in an instant, but the effects last a lifetime.
5. Preaching the biblical message of repentance creates a backlash. (Some do not want to change and do not appreciate being confronted!)

II. Personal Sharing - 2 Peter 2:20-22, Col 3:1-5

- a. Sin entangles and overcomes us. These are hard words that we must accept!
- b. As in the Light and Darkness study, the leader should begin by opening up his life, sharing his main temptations and sins (as a disciple). Then the other person can share. Get Specific.
- c. Discuss Mark 7:20-21 and the sins of the heart, such as bitterness, resentment, and lack of forgiveness.

III. What Is Worldly Sorrow? / Godly Sorrow? 2 Corinthians 7:8-11

- a. Worldly Sorrow - We're sorry we got caught, or that we have suffered. We are emotional, not because of what we did to Jesus, but because of the consequences.
- b. Godly Sorrow - Look at what it produces:
 - Earnestness - sincerity and seriousness - "I will change."
 - Eagerness - characterized by a desire to get together, study, etc.
 - Indignation - anger toward Satan, personal weakness, etc.
 - Alarm - we cannot be nonchalant about our sin
 - Longing (affection) - characterized by an appreciation of the people that brought conviction into our lives
 - Readiness to see justice done - a willingness to face the consequences of our sin.
- c. Are you prepared to repent (of the specific sins from point II)?

IV. What Are The Results of Repentance? Acts 3:19-20

- a. Reconciliation with God
- b. Refreshing from God
- c. Restoration of Christian Relationships

Assignments:

- a. Write up your sin list from the following verses: Mark 7:20-23, Romans 1:18-32, 1 Cor 6:9-11, Ephesians 4:17 - 5:6, Col 3:1-5, 2 Tim 3:1-5, Rev 21:8
- b. Prayerfully consider your specific repentance.
- c. Re-read the Medical Account of the crucifixion.

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3. REMEMBER YOUR FIRST LOVE

Pre-Lesson Assignment: Read Medical Account

1. Rev 2:1-5

What did the Ephesian disciples do well?

- worked hard / persevered - endured hardship / Intolerant of sin. What did they lack?
- Heart motivation - they stopped loving God with their whole heart. We want to talk about your walk with God, how it was at the beginning, and help you remember your first love.
- Question: How did you feel when you first got baptized?

2. Mark 4:1-20

What happens in our lives to make us forget? (*what follows are the biblical issues. As the teacher, you need to identify which things specifically happened in their lives to choke out the word*)

- Shallow convictions - not allowing the Word to take root. Why does this happen? (*not in the Word each day, not being open about temptation, etc*)
- The Worries of this life - what are they in your life?
 - a. Difficult relationships -
 - b. Discouragement
 - c. Life challenges: school, career, marriage, kids, debt...)
- The deceitfulness of wealth - why is it hard for the rich to enter the kingdom? Because money makes people arrogant, thinking they are better / smarter / more clever than others. This is what happened to the disciples in Laodicea. Rev 3:14-17
- The desire for other things - What are things that typically drag people away from God?
 - a. The love of money - discussed above
 - b. The desire for sensual fulfillment - alcohol, drugs, sex, the club scene
 - c. The desire for a relationship - compromising by pursuing a relationship with a non-Christian.

3. Rev 3:5

How do we get back our first love?

- Remember (redo sin list, consider forgiveness, positive relationships, peace)
- Repent (turn from overt, blatant sin)
- Do the things you did at first
 - a. Read the Bible daily - keep a spiritual journal
 - b. Pray daily (*help them write up a list*)
 - c. Share your faith daily (*Philemon 6*)
 - d. Attend all the services
 - e. Resolve any ongoing conflicts quickly!

Assignments:

- a. Read 1 & 2 Peter, record your observations.
- b. Share your faith at least once daily.
- c. Pray with someone in your Bible Talk daily.

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Intro: Ephesians 2:11-22

- **Vs 11-12** Where we were before baptism - Separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship (not a part of God's people), without hope, without God.
- **Vs 14-22** Now:
 1. We are brought near - we have access to the Father
 2. Fellow citizens with God's people - God's nation
 3. Members of God's household - God's family
 4. The dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit - God's temple
 5. One nation - One family - One temple - One Church

I. Attitudes and Foundations of Unity - Ephesians 4:1-16

A. Attitudes

1. Humility - how do you respond when challenged?
2. Effort - in your prior experience, did you make every effort to promote unity - in your zone, your BT, etc.?

B. Foundations

The seven standards of unity

1. One body - the church. There are not thousands, hundreds, or even tens. There is but one.
2. One Spirit - The Holy Spirit. He indwells true disciples, he creates faith in an unbelieving world, he convicts us and the world in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment.
3. One Hope - that Jesus will one day return. All wrongs will be made right, there will be a final judgment, and those who have lived by God's truth will receive the inheritance prepared for us since the creation of the world.
4. One Lord - Jesus, king of kings and Lord of Lords. He is Lord of everything, or Lord of nothing at all.
5. One Faith - Faith that Jesus is the one and only Son of God, that he died for our sins, was buried and raised on the third day.
6. One baptism - baptism into Christ as a true disciple for the forgiveness of sins.
7. One God and Father of us all.

II. Causes of Disunity

A. False prophets. Jesus told us to watch out! **Matt 7:15-16**

B. False teachings: 1 Tim 4:1-3

1. Abstinance from marriage - the priesthood (Catholic)
2. Abstinance from certain foods
3. Original Sin and Infant baptism
 - a. Became church doctrine in 542 a.d.

b. Practiced by Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, disqualifying them from the “One Church”

4. Praying Jesus into your heart (or accepting Christ)

a. became an official doctrine of the church until the mid-1800s, almost 2000 years after the resurrection!

b. Practiced by Baptists, Methodists, some Pentecostals, Community Churches (Saddleback, Mariners, etc), and ‘para-church’ organizations such as Campus Crusade for Christ. Again, if they reject the “one baptism” of Ephesians 4.4, they are not in the one Church.

III. Rom 12:1-8 - How Can I Promote Unity In The Body?

a. Attitude - Offer your body as a living sacrifice

b. Attitude - Each member belongs to all the others

c. Action: Discover and exercise your gift

1. Prophecy (preaching)

2. Serving - many opportunities (Deacons in charge of Kid’s Kingdom, Ushering, Parking, Building Maintenance, etc);

3. Teaching - becoming a Bible Talk Leader

4. Encouraging - everyone needs to encourage

5. Contributing - everyone gives at least the tithe; some are blessed more than others and can give much more.

6. Leadership - becoming a Zone Leader

7. Showing Mercy

Conclusion:

Do you believe in the One Church? Do you have any misgivings about what we believe or teach on the subject?

Assignments:

1. Restudy the Church Study from 1st Principles

2. Read Revolution through Restoration, parts one and two

3. Write down any questions you have. Will be discussed next session.

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5. RELATIONSHIPS

I. Your Joy: Relationships within the Church

a. John 13:34-35 - What is the standard that Jesus sets for our relationships?

b. 1 Thess 2:17-19 - Describe Paul's relationships: When you were previously involved in the church, in what ways were your relationships either like his or unlike his? Why?

c. Discuss prior relationship problems. Is there anyone in the church that you are not completely resolved with? (*any relationship problem needs to be completely resolved before restoration*). To what degree were the following sins involved in past relationship problems:

1. Pride? Proverbs 13:10

2. Resentment? (*Often comes up when the person is confronted regarding his / her sin*)

Elements in Great Relationships

1. Heb 3:12-14 - Daily Contact. Discuss how to make that happen.

2. James 5:16 - Openness and confession

3. Eph 6:18 - Daily prayer for one another

4. Col 1:28-29 - What should be your goal in your relationships?

5. Are you willing to strive to do these things in your Christian relationships?

II. Your Purpose: Relationships outside the Church

How many friends do you have outside of the church?

a. How Jesus reached out:

1. Cold Contact - John 4:4-10 What did Jesus overcome to have this conversation? (*fatigue, contemporary prejudices*)

2. Relationships - Luke 19:5-10 - Jesus invited himself over to Zacchaeus' home. They had a relationship.

3. Attitude: Matt 9:35-38 - How did Jesus feel about the people he was reaching out to?

b. Specific Commands of the Bible:

- 1. Matthew 22:37-38** What does the 2nd greatest command have to do with reaching out?
- 2. Matthew 28:18-20** How is this command written to every one of us?
- 3. Mark 1:16-18** If we follow Jesus, what will we become?
- 4. Philemon 6** What will the sharing of our faith do for us? Why?

c. Personal Application

- 1. What is the most intimidating thing to you about sharing your faith? Are you willing to work through it?**
- 2. How many friends do you have outside the church? Does making friends, initiating conversations, etc come easily to you, or is it difficult?**
- 3. How do you feel about reaching out “cold contact” ?**

Assignments:

- 1. Resolve any relationship problems you may have had with any disciple currently in the church.***
- 2. Make a list of everyone you know outside the church.***
- 3. Invite at least one new person per day to come to church with you.***