

Falling – The Early Years

Part 3 – Sunday, March 24th, 2024

Proverbs 24:16 For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:

- This is our third lesson of seven on our subject of “Falling”.
 - Falling is part of everyone’s life.
 - Remember, there is not one of us that has not experienced a few falls.
- In our previous two lessons we looked at infancy and then at the toddler stage.
 - With infancy we see few falls that are self-inflicted if any.
 - It is up to those caring for the newborn to keep them from harm, to nurture them and protect them.
 - This holds true in our spiritual life as well.
 - Newborns in Christ shouldn’t be expected to just start walking with God, they need fed and taught to do so.
 - If and when they fall it is not their fault as it is those left to care for them.
 - Then we looked at the second stage, the toddler to small child
 - This is where the most falls occur as these young ones are learning to walk,
 - they make mistakes, miss obstacles, and fall simply due to ignorance.

- While they may take the steps, they're stronger with a caretaker holding them up and will be less prone to falls and/or getting hurt.
 - When they do fall they must be taught to get up and keep walking.
 - This too works in our spiritual application in that they are in no way independent.
 - They still need fed and nurtured and protected.
 - They also need to be taught to get up and keep trying to walk with Jesus!

- Today, we look at our third stage of life, young child to pre-teen (The Early Years)
 - I'd say the ages between 5-12.
 - Walking isn't enough now, there is running and jumping too!
 - This brings us to new falls, hard falls, and sometimes damaging falls.

- We don't just walk; we run & jump now too.
 - Crawling is done for fun...we're big kids now!
 - With this new era of maturity comes greater opportunities to go far or to fall far
 - We build things
 - We invent things
 - Some start sporting activities
 - Making friends is vital and even fun
 - With each new endeavor comes the new potential to fall
 - Destruction of what's been built
 - Inventions fail, apathy sets in
 - Greater injuries are incurred the harder you play

- With each friendship comes potential heart break
 - Getting up is now natural
 - Tantrums can delay going on
 - Denial can delay going on
 - This is the age when what we learn is tested
 - We push what we know to see if it's true
 - Gravity is real, but we can think we are special
 - Running into walls hurts, but we are invincible
 - While we may be reluctant at times to receive instruction, it is still greatly needed at this stage of life
 - Sometimes those who care see more than we do
 - Sometimes we need help getting up
 - Boo boos still need mended
 - Much like falling on a bike, someone needs to encourage us to pedal again
 - With each fall we can gain knowledge that should help us to not suffer that fall again
 - We can learn how better to look for what caused the fall
 - We can learn who it is that keeps us safe
 - Be it those who care over us
 - Be it He who designed us
- **Falling is...**
 - Allowing a besetting sin to make us stumble through losing focus on where we are going
 - **Hebrews 12:1** Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- Making a way for us to do what we want, or falling by choice

- **Romans 13:13** Let us **walk** honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

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

- Feeling useless because of perceived failure

- **1Kings 19:9** And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

- **10** And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

- **God's Reply to Elijah 1Ki 19:18** "Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

- **Falling happens, our choice is whether we get back up stay down**

- Now let's look at the spiritual application
 - I'd say after 2-4 years of spiritual growth

- Walking isn't enough now, there is running and jumping too
 - This is about striving to try new things in service to Christ
 - This brings us to new falls, hard falls, and sometimes damaging falls.
- We don't just walk; we run & jump now too.
 - We don't need such close watching with our caretaker
 - Crawling is in the past and we don't need held up to walk
 - With this new era of maturity comes greater opportunities to go far or to fall far
 - We build things
 - We invent things
 - Some start getting active in public for all to see
 - Making new converts (friends) is vital and even fun
 - With each new endeavor comes the new potential to fall
 - Destruction of what's been built
 - Inventions fail, apathy sets in
 - Greater injuries are incurred the harder you strive to walk IN Christ
 - With each convert/friend comes potential heart break
 - Getting up is now natural
 - Tantrums can delay going on
 - Denial can delay going on
 - This is the age when what we learn is tested
 - We push what we know to see if it's true

- Gravity is real, but we can think we are special
 - The things God has shown to be absolute will be questioned
 - The things caretakers have put in our lives will be tested to see if they hold up
 - None of us our special, if it is an absolute of God and we go against it, we will fall
 - Running into walls hurts, but we are invincible
 - We may try again and again for a while to disprove a doctrine or remove safeguards
 - Eventually, what is not true will be revealed as a lie to trip us and make us fall
 - While we may be reluctant at times to receive instruction, it is still greatly needed at this stage of life
 - Sometimes those who care still see more than we do
 - Sometimes we need help getting up
 - The hurts from falls still need mended
 - God has given us a family to help heal the wounds of hard falls while serving more
 - We need encouraged to get back on track to walk with Christ
 - With each fall we can gain knowledge that should help us to not suffer that fall again
 - We can learn how better to look for what caused the fall
 - We can learn who it is that keeps us safe
 - Be it those who care over us
 - Be it He who designed us
- Where would we be if not for those who have watched over us?

- Patched up our boo boos and brushed us off?
 - They pushed us to keep trying, to get up and go on.
 - They would at least try to stop us when they knew we were about to hurt ourselves.
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- Where would we be without those who've prayed for us and instructed us in the ways of righteousness?
 - Who teach us how to walk uprightly & circumspectly?
 - As our spiritual maturity continues they will still be playing a vital role in our lives
 - We will start having younger siblings in Christ that will be watching as we mature and need our courage and strength sometimes
 - We will have to learn from mistakes and keep going

