

Series on Falling

Introduction: You Must Be Born Again

Proverbs 24:16; John 3:1-21

Proverbs 24:16 For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

- As we start our Series on Falling this morning my hope is to...
 - Show the parallels between the physical stages of life and the spiritual stages of life
 - Making comparisons of the maturity and how it relates to the falls we experience in each stage
- I want us to know these absolutes as we go forward...
 - Falling is part of life.
 - There is not one of us here that hasn't fallen down several times in our lives
 - Not every fall is a failure
 - Not every fall is a choice
 - Falling isn't what I fear, in fact, it can be fun sometimes (*sin is fun for a season*)
 - it's the stop at the end we must fear
 - that's where the hurt happens
 - Choosing to fall will become a lifestyle until there is no life left
- Stage 1 is Infancy to Toddler (0-2)
- Stage 2 is Toddler to Small Child (3-6)
- Stage 3 is Young Child to Pre-Teen (7-12)
- Stage 4 is Teen to Young Adult (13-21ish)
- Stage 5 is Adult (25-40)
- Stage 6 is Mature Adult (40-65)
- Stage 7 is Elder (65 & Up)

- Each stage is unique to the reasons for and types of falls we experience
- I do not consider myself an authority on much.
 - I do have a great love for God's Word,
 - and I have a great passion for cooking and food,
 - but I am in authority or neither.
 - However, looking back on my Christian walk of the last 25 years I feel that I may have something that I could offer those who may not have made the right choices
 - those who often learned life's lessons the hard way.
 - Falling is only fun when you're tethered to something secure.
 - The problem with falling in the Christian aspect is that we usually have untethered ourselves from our foundation which is the Lord Jesus Christ
 - It is an unfortunate fact that I have become somewhat of an authority on the subject of falling, spiritually speaking
 - As I have matured in Christ, my falls have run the gambit of diversity,
 - and I believe has given me some insight to this particular subject matter.
 - My hope through this is maybe God might use me to help someone else miss a fall or two
 - Wisdom is something that has escaped me for a good portion of my life
 - I hope that someone might hear this and receive some wisdom
 - Because it would be wise to learn from someone else's mistakes.

- So, today is simply an introduction, because you cannot have spiritual falls if you don't have the Spirit
 - Today I want to establish your spiritual state
 - Because in order to grow and mature spiritually, you have to be **Born Again!**
 - Go to **John 3** with me as we look at this thought, You Must be Born Again!

You Must Be Born Again

John 31 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

- Here is a man that is more than likely in Stage 6-7 of his natural life
 - He could not be a "ruler of the Jews" if he had not reached a level of distinguished maturity
 - Yet he came to a 30-year-old Christ and called Him Rabbi
 - He knew something was missing...

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, "**Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**"

- Christ's bold statement was meant to make Nicodemus consider something other than what he knew to be true
 - Jesus knew Nicodemus' heart and what he was looking for

- Nicodemus needed to understand that all his religious pursuits were missing something
 - He was in pursuit of Jehovah's Kingdom
 - But he did not know the Kingdom's King
 - He was without spirit

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

- You cannot rationalize Salvation
 - There is no physical answer to spiritual things, save Christ
 - We are born into sin according to **Romans 5:12** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
 - Because of Adam & Eve, we are born without spirit
 - This means we are physically unable to worship God
 - **John 4:24** *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

5 Jesus answered, "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

- Jesus explains to Nicodemus in terms he will understand
 - Born of water is about being clean
 - The Spirit is new to Nicodemus in this cleansing act
 - Being born of flesh is the natural

- Being born of Spirit is supernatural
- Without the supernatural, Nicodemus' physical pursuits would not grant him access to Jehovah's Kingdom

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

- Jesus is not the author of confusion...
 - He comforts Nicodemus to say, "Don't get lost in the words, understanding is not about seeing, it's about faith."

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, "How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?"

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life.

- Now Jesus reminds Nicodemus of a salvation in the Old Testament

- Israel had sinned and God was judging the sin with serpents
- Their salvation from the sting of sin was to look at the brazen serpent on the staff
- Sin's sting is upon all man, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"
- Nicodemus, a righteous man by most people's standards, including his own, needed to understand he was IN sin and needed salvation

For God So Loved the World

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

- Jesus Christ was lifted up on a cross so that all that are in sin's sting may look to Him and live
- Being born again is about...
 - hearing of Salvation (the wind blows, and we hear it)

- and believing (understanding is not a prerequisite)
- Being baptized by the Spirit is the only way to receive the life Christ gives
 - This is how one is Born Again!
 - This happens the moment you look to Jesus as the payment for your sin
 - The Spirit of God then covers you with all that Christ is
 - Then God only sees the Son He sent to redeem His creation to Himself
- Being condemned is not about something you do
 - If you have not accepted Christ as your sin payment
 - You are already condemned
 - You were born that way...
 - To fix it, You Must Be Born Again!