

SPIRITUAL DETERIORITUS

Hosea 7:8-9

Introduction: Things have a way of looking normal but upon a closer look or attempts to use them reveal that they are defective, not normal, and even dead. For instance a hollow, rotten log. Hunters have glanced down at a log in their path, stepped upon the log and it gave way, crushed beneath the weight of the hunter. Sometimes people look healthy, seem to act healthy but inside their body there is a sickness which cannot be seen from the outside. Sad to say, there is a similar thing that happens to one's spirit. The text speaks of God's people who once were vibrant, excited about being God's people, who had changed on the inside but on the outside still looked and acted like they always had but God saw an emptiness inside, things had changed, they were not the same loyal, loving God people they once were.

I. WHAT CAUSES SPIRITUAL DECAY?

1. Spending too much time with the world.
 - One's job or business can absorb a person's interests, attention and time.
 - One's friends and companions who are not Christians can draw one away from God.
 - Marrying someone who is not a Christian can work two ways: the Christian partner can so influence the non Christian partner that he/she becomes a Christian or the non Christian partner can so influence the Christian partner that he/she draws away from that once close relationship with God.
 - The world offers much to a person and so often the offer is just too great to refuse and the Christian yields to that worldly temptation, thus going away from God.
2. Too little regard for God.
 - Like God's illustration of a cake: burned on the outside and doughy on the inside, thus too much of the world and not enough of God.
 - Spending so much time pursuing material (worldly) things that no time is left for God.
 - So occupied with one's favorite pastime that no time is left for Bible study, prayer, church attendance or even for God.
 - So involved in local, county, country activities that there is no time left for spiritual matters.
 - So intent on pointing out the faults of fellow church members that there isn't any time or interest left for God.
 - So concerned about doctrinal issues and church differences that no thought is given to the need of lost souls around.
- Considering these which are just a few, no wonder there is spiritual decay among God's Children.

II. WHAT ARE SOME SYMPTOMS OF SPIRITUAL DECAY?

1. There are inward weaknesses.
 - Cannot grasp or understand the scriptures.
 - Does not pray anymore as God didn't answer as he/she thought God should have.

- Any church-related duty is a chore and is uninteresting.
 - Easily entangled in temptations.
 - Seeks to avoid any Church/Christian responsibilities.
 - Do you know anybody with these symptoms? What about yourself?
2. There are outward signs of Spiritual decay.
 - As grey hairs come one by one, so comes spiritual decay, little by little.
 - Change in attitude, pride and fretfulness appears, humility and gentleness are gone.
 - Begins to act like anybody else in the business world or on the job.
 - One's family life begins to deteriorate.
 - Gives "lip service" to God instead of the "real thing." Even stops serving God.
 - One's visible lifestyle changes reveal the inward spiritual decay.
 3. Strangely and dangerously, one is insensible to the Spiritual decay happening.
 - Sin blinds, hardens the heart, numbs the conscience and deafens the ears.
 - Others can see what is happening but it is just their imagination says the guilty one.
 - If the conscience is awakened a bit, it is quieted by excuses and sadly, after a while of constant excuses and ignoring the conscience, it remains silent.

CONCLUSION:

1. "Lip service" christianity won't do for God says: *"...my son, give Me thy heart..."*
2. It's fairly easy to see spiritual decay in others but do they see it in YOU? Have you perhaps become numb, deaf, blind and are giving God "lip service?"
3. Take an inventory, ask God to show you what your true, real status is with Him. Then make whatever change you need to make in order to be exactly where God wants you to be.