

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHURCH MEMBER FALLS?

### Acts 5:3, 12-16

**Introduction:** Know any perfect Church member? Well, there aren't any today and there weren't back when the Church first got started.

Everything was going well for the Church at Jerusalem: the gospel was being preached, believers were united in heart, committed, numbers growing from 120 to over 8,000, the joke of "Christians" was not being respected and gaining influence THEN trouble came as two members of the Church lied to God and were killed by the hand of God. Rumors spread like wildfire - there were HYPOCRITES in the Church.

Some professed followers (Church members) do fall away just like Ananias and Sapphira. Some are leaders, pillars, so to speak in their Church. Some fall into sin and forsake their Church and all it stands for. Some leave the Church and go back into the worldly way of life.

Why? Did these Church members lose their salvation? Did God remove them from His Family?

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHURCH MEMBER FALLS?

### 1. God is separating the precious from the evil.

- From the very beginning the Church has been a mixture of real believers and mere professors.
- God sows His wheat and Satan sows his tares.
- God has His sheep and Satan has his goats.
- God has His true believers and Satan has his hypocrites (Judas, Demas, Alexander, Simon Magus, Hymenaeus, Philetus, Diotrefes, Ananias and Sapphira - as examples).
- God always separates His own from those of Satan.
- God tells us to let Him do the weeding.
  - God uses many ways/things to do it: trials, preaching of His Word, temptations, acts of judgment, etc.

### 2. God reminds us by the fall of others that Salvation is by His Grace ALONE.

- Were it not for God's grace, none of us would last very long.
- No believer should ever be proud, boastful or presumptuous about his/her spiritual strength.
- The believer's only hope is the blood of Jesus and His righteousness as his/her own substitute.
- Without Jesus Christ, we are nothing and can do nothing, but in Jesus Christ, all things are possible.

### 3. Whenever a Church Member falls, God graciously draws His True members closer to Him.

- Mighty members have fallen and it should be a reminder to every believer of his/her own weakness.
- Their falling should drive the true believer closer to Jesus Christ for refuge.
- The only comfort, security and rest is in God's unchanging Grace.

### 4. Although many do fall, God keeps on accomplishing His purpose of Grace.

- Remember, Jesus Christ has not lost a single one of HIS sheep.
- Jesus Christ has not been defeated by Satan.
- True believers will come closer together as a loving family whenever a member falls.

**5. Though many who profess faith in Jesus Christ do fall and depart from His Church, God still preserves His Church and maintains His cause in this world.**

**NOTHING HAS CHANGED!**

- God's promises cannot be broken
- God's covenant cannot be nullified.
- God's purpose cannot be stopped.
- God's power cannot be defeated.
- God's Church is still safe.
- God's Honor is still secure.
- Though some may fall, all who are TRUE believers will endure, last and remain safe, as safe as those already in heaven.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. The local Church has a mixture of true believers and those who "profess" to believe but don't.
  - God's Church is made up of only TRUE believers.
2. Every Church has many "members" who have not been to services nor communicated with the Church in years and who are not active in any Church.
3. Very often much publicity is given over some "Church leader" who has fallen.
4. God's Church role doesn't have all the names our Church roles have and only He knows the difference.
5. Do not worry that people are losing their salvation whenever anyone falls. Those who fall never had anything in the first place. You cannot lose what you never had.
6. God is always in charge and He will in His time separate those who are His and those who are Satan's.
7. Salvation is a gift from God through Jesus Christ, given to us as we exercise faith. Not of works.