

## 10-17-21

### Acts 20:1-12

After 3 years it is time for Paul to move on. The riot/uproar made Ephesus made it impossible for Paul to minister at. It was time for him to move on.

**Read verse 1-6.** As was his custom, Paul got together with the disciples at Ephesus and encouraged them. After bidding them farewell, he went off to Macedonia to encourage other disciples. Paul knew that it was not all about him. He knew it was all about Jesus and that it took a team approach to carry out the great task that the Lord had called them to.

Luke lists 7 godly men who were part of the team. We won't stop to comment on each one due to time, but each one was a faithful Christ follower and helped make the team effective. BTW, **vv.5-6** show us that Luke is traveling with Paul during this time. He uses "us" and "we" to show that he was with Paul as a firsthand eyewitness.

Paul approached discipleship by gathering believers together as a team and then encouraging them all along the way to spread the good news about Jesus and to honor and obey Him each day.

What does this mean to us? We need to remember that we are all on the same team. We also need to realize that we can be much more effective at being and making disciples if we will get together as a team and encourage one another.

We must be careful, watchful that we don't fall out of Church. Our priorities should be living a life that is not only honoring and glorifying to the Lord. But one that is in total subjection, we are to be living for Jesus. Our lives are to be a daily sacrifice, an offering unto our Lord.

The world today is set up perfectly for any of us to fall out of church. We can't blame the government, or a virus for the situation in the church/or in our personal spiritual walk. All this chaos has just revealed what was lying underneath. The church, the body of Messiah, in our time, in America, hadn't had its faith challenged corporately like it is now. God is pulling the curtain down in the lives of believers. Checking to see what our heart looks like.

The story in our selected text took place on a Sunday. The assembly that gathered together was not much different than what we have here today. In this assembly was a man named Eutychus who ...Sat in the window ...Fell out the window ...Died ...And was revived

I want to look at his story and preach on the subject "Falling Out of Church". You may be thinking ...Why are you preaching to us about "Falling out of church"? ...We are here!!" And you are here. Some have walked away, and if the Bible is correct, many more will. I want us to think, are we just playing church, is it a ritual, tradition?

### Read verse 7.

#### I. God's people gather.

- Notice that this assembly met on Sunday - "upon the first day of the week". Sunday is very important the New Testament church. Jesus was resurrected on a Sunday Morning. Sunday is "the Lord's Day" ...the Christian Sabbath.

- The word says that they **“came together.”** Satan is looking to destroy Jesus’ bride, the church and the current state in America is playing right into his hands. Do you think it’s a coincidence that every time the church gets back to doing what God has ordained it to do that, something happens and shut it back down? Is it coincidence believers don’t think twice to bad mouth anyone they don’t agree with?
- God’s followers are not called to serve themselves or be isolated from other believers. We have said many times if you have been sick, stay home. If you are of greater health risks, stay home. But please don’t stay away because of fear and convenience, that is exactly what Satan wants.
- They “came together” and broke bread. And Paul preached his message until midnight. Wow, how many would stay till midnight?

One pastor who was an avid sports fan said that he gave up on sports. He listed the reasons why:

- -Every time I went, they asked me for money.
- -The people with whom I had to sit didn't seem very friendly.
- -The seats were too hard and not at all comfortable.
- -I went to many games, but the coach never came to call on me.
- -The referee made a decision with which I could not agree.
- -I suspected that I was sitting with some hypocrites
- -The people came to see their friends and what others were wearing rather than to see the game.
- -Some games went into overtime, and I was late getting home.
- -The band played some numbers that I had never heard before.
- -It seems that the games are scheduled when I want to do other things.
- -I was taken to too many games by my parents when I was growing up.
- -I don't want to take my children to any games, because I want them to choose for themselves what sport they like best. -Author Unknown
- Do we fail to realize what a privilege it is to be able to assemble together and worship the Lord!

## II. Apathy among God’s people.

- **Read verses 8-9.**
- Eutychus literally **“fell out of church”**, the house was full. This was more than a regular service. It was Paul’s farewell message. Eutychus was sitting on the windowsill. **Verse 7 says “Paul continued speaking, KJV says, “Paul was long in his preaching”** - This text encourages me, If Eutychus could fall asleep during preaching by the Apostle Paul then I don’t feel so bad about those snoring through my sermons!

The following events in this story illustrate what can cause believers to fall out of church.

### **1. Dozing- “sinking into a deep sleep.” (v.9)**

Falling out of church isn't just about not being physically present. An individual can come every Sunday and still be falling out of church. It begins with dozing off. Think about when you sit down in the chair, you relax, maybe the lighting is darker, the temperature is a little on the warmer side. The room is mostly quiet, except for the person speaking, and then you feel your eye lids start to get heavy and ache. (If you could just shut them for a minute and listen. You don't need your eyes to hear.)

Dozing spiritually can happen when we become apathetic with what is being preached. (Lack of interest, concern, enthusiasm, or emotion). Or we become callous to what is being preached. Or quench the leading of the H.S. by justifying or by being ignorant of purpose. (stupid)

Dozing can lead to us not being sober, and vigilant. We are primed to give into sinful behaviors. You maybe in the assembly of believers but you are disconnected from it.

### **2. After Dozing comes Declining. “He was overcome by sleep;” (V.9)**

- Once we fall fast asleep most of us are no longer aware of the things around us.
- Notice that Eutychus fell out of the window. To fall out of the window he had to have been leaning out the window.
- What happens when we lean into our own ways, desires and will for our own way?
- Eutychus was completely oblivious to the danger about to come upon him.
- When we are disconnected, declining from the body of Messiah we are exposed to attacks.

### **3. After the “DOZING” & the “DECLINING” comes “DYING”**

- Now I am not saying that you lose your salvation, but your spiritual condition is basically dead... There is no life in it. You are beyond dozing and declining you are now at a point where you become a hindrance to the lost.
- You have gone from being a witness of Christ to a stumbling block. At this point your witness is damaged. You have no joy of your salvation. You are no longer fit to be used for God's glory.
- People look at what you claim to be and then see your actions and they want nothing of Jesus because your hypocritical lifestyle! Are you dozing, declining, or dying? If so, there is an opportunity to make things right today!

## **III. Compassion of God's people. (Verses 10-12)**

- Paul goes down to Eutychus, but he didn't go alone. Notice that he tells the people **“Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him”** They went down with Paul. Why? ...Because they cared about their brother! They didn't just kick back and say “ah ...Let Paul deal with him!” “They went down together out of a burden for there a brother who was in a bad situation!”

- Many of our brethren are in a bad situation. Many have quit church, or on the verge of quitting. Many are backslidden. Many need the help and encouragement.
- Where will they find that help... where will they find that encouragement?
- This assembly was delighted in the fact that their brother was restored. They had compassion on him; they loved him and rejoiced when he was brought up!
- I want you to notice that Eutychus was a priority to these people. It was after midnight when this happened, and they remained until the break of day. I look forward to the opportunity to rejoice when those brothers and sisters who have “fallen out of church” come back home. Whether they have fallen out physically and or spiritually.

### **Conclusion**

God’ people must gather.

God’s people must beware of apathy. It will lead to dozing, declining, and dying.

God’s people must be governed by compassion. Our aim should be on others. Bringing the gospel, hope, love, joy, peace, understanding, forgiveness, acceptance, and servants.