



**(SLIDE #1) DISAPPOINTMENTS  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND NEW  
CHRISTIANS FACE!**

**Introduction:**

- A. Joys Of Evangelism:
  - 1. It is thrilling to see people searching for God!
  - 2. It is exciting to see people learn about Christ!
  - 3. It is inspiring to watch people learn God's Truths and become so eager to obey Him!
  
- B. Delights Of Watching Boys And Girls Mature, Become Teens, And Then Young Adults.
  - 1. Boys and girls grow up asking questions and seeking to understand Biblical teachings like creation in contrast with evolution, free will in contrast with depravity, God's love in contrast with human suffering, baptism in contrast with belief only or the Lord's Church in contrast to denominations.
  - 2. Small children become preteens, preteens become teens, teens become young adults -- it is amazing to watch them mature.
  - 3. When parents provide and encourage opportunities, it is amazing to watch children's interest and skills grow -- we saw this in the last few weeks in Lads-2-Leaders!
  
- C. **(Slide #2) CAUTION!!!** However, There Are Discouragements That New Christians And Young People Who Are "Raised In The Church" Experience.
  - 1. Some of these discouragements are temporary; some last a lifetime!
  - 2. Some are caused by misunderstandings; some are caused by what they see and understand!
  
- D. How Can New Christians And Young People Work Through Those Discouragements And Have A Real Appreciation For, Respect For, And A Positivity For Christianity?
  - 1. God intended for Christianity to provide great joy!
    - a. God wants us to have joy in Christianity!

1. I Jn. 1:4 “And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” [Jesus being the Divine Son of God; love your brethren!]
  2. Jn. 15:11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.” [He has just spoken about the vine and the branches.]
  3. Rom. 5:11 “And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”
  4. Phil. 4:4 “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”
  5. I Pet. 1:8,9 “whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, <sup>9</sup>receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of *your* souls.”
- b. The growth of New Christians and young people brings joy to older Christians!
1. II Jn. 4 “I rejoiced greatly that I have found *some* of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father.”
  2. III Jn. 3,4 “For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth *that is* in you, just as you walk in the truth. <sup>4</sup>I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”
2. In “The Parable Of The Sower” or called by others “The Parable Of The Soils”, Jesus describes some Christians who do not grow:
- a. Lk. 8:13,14 “But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. <sup>14</sup>Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.”
  - b. Lots of things can hinder the Word from taking root and growing!

E. Today We Examine Some Of The Things That Cause These Disappointments:

**I. (Slide #3) Struggles With The Same Weaknesses With Which They Struggled Before They Became Christians.**

- A. Many Young People Who Have Not Become Christians Struggle If They Can Overcome Sin Or If They Can Live A Faithful Christian Life!
- B. New Christians Often Become Discouraged Because They Struggle With The Same Weaknesses (Sins) With Which They Struggled Before They Became Christians.

- C. Many New Christians Have Tremendous Joy And Anticipation!
1. Ac. 8:39 “Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.”
  2. Ac. 16:34 “Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.”
  3. They are excited to have been forgiven of sin!
  4. Some are excited about having a new start.
- D. HOWEVER, Some Who Have Heard That Christians Are “New Creatures” or “A New Creation”, II Cor. 5:17 Become Discouraged When They Struggle With The Same Temptations They Experienced BEFORE They Became Christians.
1. In fact, some of those temptation seem to be even stronger than before!
  2. Satan is now their enemy and wants to destroy them through temptation!
  3. Sadly, because of temptation, they fall away! Lk. 8:13
- E. What Can Christians And The Church Do To Help Them Deal With These Disappointments?
1. We must teach them about “transformation!”
    - a. Rom. 12:1,2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
    - b. Col. 3:5-11 “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, <sup>7</sup>in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. <sup>8</sup>But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, <sup>11</sup>where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ *is* all and in all.”

2. Remind them that Christians must confess their sins, seek forgiveness, and be loyal to Christ and His Will!
  - a. I Jn. 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
  - b. I Jn. 2:1 “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”
  - c. Phil. 2:12,13 “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup>for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.”

## II. (Slide #4) Hypocritical Christians Discourage Young People And New Christians.

- A. Some Have An Idealistic View That Mature Christians Are To Be Strong, Even Perfect.
  1. Sadly, quickly they realize there are NO perfect Christians; they can be disillusioned.
  2. Sometimes strong leaders will sin and this can devastate young people and new Christians! It may be a preacher, an elder, or a very respected woman.
  3. It may be a peer who sins and just breaks their heart!
- B. When They Realize That Christians Are Imperfect; They Are Terribly Disappointed!
- C. They See:
  1. Inconsistency in the lives of Christians:
    - a. They do not practice what they proclaim.
    - b. Peter taught and baptized the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, Ac. 10; later he withdrew himself from Gentiles and had no fellowship with them when some of his Jewish brethren came to visit. Gal. 2:11-14
  2. Christians mistreat other Christians -- unchristian attitudes:
    - a. Gossip about them.
    - b. Speak very derogatorily about their brothers or sisters.
    - c. With harsh words they attack others.
    - d. They see Christians be hateful or mean to each other in Bible Classes, Business Meetings, during Church work, while having recreation, or at lunch after worship services!

- D. Jesus Condemned The Jewish Leaders In Scathing Tones Because Of Hypocrisy! He Detested It! Mt. 23
  
- E. What Can Christians And The Church Do To Help Them Deal With These Disappointments?
  - 1. Try to live a consistent Christian life!
  - 2. Be great examples of faithful Christian living -- I Tim. 4:12 As Paul encouraged the young Christian man, Timothy: “Be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
  - 3. Confess sins quickly and remorsefully! Js. 4:16 “Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”
  - 4. Help young people and new Christians understand that all Christians, young AND old, are still in the process of transformation!
    - a. Phil. 2:14-16 “Do all things without complaining and disputing, <sup>15</sup>that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup>holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.”
    - b. Do not expect perfection in any other Christian!

### **III. (Slide #5) Temptations And Pressures From The World!**

- A. The Pleasures Or Sin Can Draw Them Away From The Lord And Back Into The World!
  - 1. Sin obviously often offers sin!
  - 2. If it did not, men would not be so drawn into it.
  - 3. However, sin has so much guilt, pain, and horrible consequences!
  
- B. Family, Friends, And Jobs Can Put Great Pressure Upon The New Christian To Reject The Lord, To Forsake Worship, To Turn Away From The Church, And To Return To Their Previous Life!
  - 1. Often family and friends feel that the new Christians have “sold out their religious heritage.
  - 2. Often you hear the accusation that they have joined a “cult.”

- C. Friends In Sin Can Ridicule The New Christian And Pressure Them To Return To A Previous Sinful Life! I Cor. 15:33,34 “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’<sup>34</sup> Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak *this* to your shame.”
- D. What Can Christians And The Church Do To Help Them Deal With These Disappointments?
1. Exhibit what “Seek first the Kingdom of God” means! Mt. 6:33 “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”
  2. Show who and what we love the most! Christ, His Church, and His people! I Jn. 2:15-17 “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup>For all that *is* in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup>And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”
  3. Develop close friendships with New Christians!
    - a. Be edifiers of each other spiritually!
    - b. Build friendships around serving the Lord and His work!
    - c. Make it much more than just social contacts!
  4. Help them understand the uniqueness and Divine origination of the Divinely-planned and instituted Church of Christ!

#### **IV. (Slide #6) Dishonest Promises About Christianity!**

- A. So Many False Promises Are Made By Many Religious Leaders:
1. Prosperity Gospel -- “Just serve God and become wealthy!”
  2. Success Gospel -- “Just serve God and have success in every aspect of life!”
  3. Health Gospel -- “Just serve God and have great health!”
  4. Problemless Gospel -- “Just serve God and have a life of ease and peace!”
- B. These Promises Are Empty And Deceitful Pledges And Assurances!

- C. They Were Not Promised To First Century Christians!
1. I Pet. 1:6-9 “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup>that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, <sup>8</sup>whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, <sup>9</sup>receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of *your* souls.”
  2. Js. 1:2-4 “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup>knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup>But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”
  3. Persecution was rampant against Christians in the First Century -- from Jewish antagonists and from Roman idolaters and Caesars!
- D. What Can Christians And The Church Do To Help Them Deal With These Disappointments?
1. Remind them that God NEVER promised Christian a “Rose-Garden Life!”
    - a. He NEVER promised a life void of problems!
    - b. He promised the strength to make it through any difficult we face!
    - c. Phil. 4:12,13 “I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. <sup>13</sup>I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
    - d. II Cor. 4:16-18 “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, <sup>18</sup>while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.”
  2. Strengthen the faith and resolve of young people and new Christians!
    - a. Paul and Barnabas did that on the return portion of the First Missionary Journey! Ac. 14:21,22 “And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, <sup>22</sup>strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’”

- b. Paul cautioned, warned, and encouraged young Timothy in II Tim. 3:12-14 “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. <sup>13</sup>But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. <sup>14</sup>But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*,”

## V. (Slide #7) Discouraging Attitudes Of Christians!

### A. Constant Doses Of Negativity!

- 1. NO mate, child, employee, neighbor, friend, or church members wants to be around people who are constantly negative!
- 2. Constant negativity in the pulpit:
  - a. A preacher who criticizes the members constantly will not produce a healthy congregation!
  - b. A preacher who only preaches about what is wrong with denominationalism will not produce a happy, healthy congregation!
  - c. A preacher who only talks about how BAD the world is will not produce a content congregation!
  - d. A preacher who only talks about what is wrong with the brotherhood will not produce a congregation that is focused upon Jesus.
  - e. Constant negativity will destroy the joy of all members but especially of young people and new Christians!
  - f. Congregations need to know WHO and WHAT we are for -- we love the Lord and His Word!
  - g. Yes, there are times when cautions must be given and errors must be pointed out!
    - 1. II Tim. 4:2-4 “Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup>and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”
    - 2. Ac. 20:27-30 “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. <sup>28</sup>Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. <sup>29</sup>For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup>Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”

3. When those cautions have to be given:
    - a. They must be done with genuine concern for those teaching error and for those who are hearing it!
    - b. They must be given with humility, deep conviction, and abiding concern for the Lord and for people.
    - c. They must never be done in a superior, haughty, or hateful way.
    - d. At the same time, no matter how hard one tries to be loving, some will misunderstand!
- B. What Can Christians And The Church Do To Help Them Deal With These Disappointments?
1. Pray for the souls of those in error and for those who may be influenced by them! Rom. 10:1 “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.”
  2. Acknowledge positive traits when you can. Rom. 10:2,3 “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup>For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”
  3. Have an attitude that causes people to listen to your message. II Tim. 2:24-26 “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, <sup>25</sup>in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, <sup>26</sup>and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.”

## CONCLUSION

- A. (Slide #8) CAUTION!! Yes, Disappointments Happen As People Consider Serving God.
- B. There Are Several Stages That People Go Through As They Grow Spiritually:
  1. “Buyer’s Remorse” stage -- one may almost immediately ask, “Why did I do that?”
  2. “Euphoria” stage -- they are SO GLAD they have become Christians; they are a “ball of fire.”
  3. “Discernment” stage -- they realize that not everything is ideal -- in their own lives, in the lives of others, and in the Church; they see disappointments as well as blessings.

4. “Vacillation” stage or “Seesaw” stage -- they are kind of “up and down;” here they either become apathetic, fall away, OR they move on to the next stage of permanency!
  5. “Steadiness” stage -- there is consistency, perseverance, and faithfulness.
- C. (Slide #9) Young People And New Christians -- Seek Steadiness And Faithfulness!
- D. To Mature Christians:
1. Try to understand the struggles young people and new Christians have!
  2. Gal. 6:1,2 “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”
  3. Rom. 15:1,2 “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup>Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good, leading to edification.”
  4. There will be things new Christians do not understand and about which new Christians will struggle:
    - a. Attending every worship service -- they may come from religions where worship is rarely expected or from religions where they only meet once a week.
    - b. Alcohol -- families and societies practice and encourage it.
    - c. Gambling -- many think that is just what everyone does.
    - d. Ecumenicalism -- the idea is promoted that any religious belief and any religion is acceptable to God.
  5. Be patient; help them through struggles; help them grow!
  6. Show them the value of worship and the Truths of God’s Word!
  7. Make friends with them; encourage them.
- E. Our Call: “Come To Jesus!”
1. NEVER put your faith in family, friends, preacher, or other Church member!
  2. ALWAYS put your faith IN JESUS -- “He will carry you through!”