

Signs of Spiritual Decline

Proverbs 14:14

Intro: By spiritual decline we mean the eroding of vital godliness, the soul's communion with its beloved becoming less intimate and regular. If the Christian's affections cool, he will delight himself less in the Lord and there will be a languishing of his graces.

I. WANING OF OUR LOVE FOR CHRIST

If the Lord Jesus is less precious to our souls than He was formerly, in his:

- Person (He is God)
- Office (He is High Priest)

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be ***touched with the feeling*** of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ***2*** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

- Work (Holy Life, Death on the Cross, Resurrection, soon return)
- Grace (His Grace)

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

- Benefits (***Ps 103:2*** Bless the LORD, O my soul, and **forget not all his benefits:**)

Whatever we may think of ourselves, we have assuredly gone back.

II. ABATEMENT OF OUR ZEAL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

If we have become less conscientious than formerly of whether our conduct become or bring reproach upon the Holy Name we bear, then that is a sure mark of our spiritual decline.

III. LOSS OF OUR SPIRITUAL APPETITE

Was there not a time when you could truly say, " Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts." (***Jer. 15:16***)?

IV. SLUGGISHNESS OR DROWSINESS OF MIND

One is in sad frame when exercise before God and communion with him is supplanted by carnal ease.

V. RELAXING IN OUR WATCHFULNESS AGAINST SIN

The want of alertness in guarding against all that is evil, under a quick and tender sense of its loathsome nature, is a sure sign of spiritual decline.

VI. ATTEMPTING TO DEFEND OUR SINS

There are some sins which all know are indefensible, but there are others which even the professing Christian seek to justify. Sin, when we have committed it,

Losses its sinfulness

Appears a very difficult thing from what it did in others

VII. THINGS OF THE WORLD GAIN CONTROL OF US

If therefore follows that when a Christian begins to thirst after the things of time and sense and evinces a fondness for them, his grace is sadly declined