

Are You A Spiritual “Drop-Out”?

by Bill Crews

All over our nation parents, teachers, schools, school boards and states are becoming alarmed and concerned about the “drop-out” rate among our high school students. It is indeed a serious and disturbing problem fraught with tragic and unpleasant consequences. But I would like for you to think with me about a “drop-out” problem that is not only far more serious; it is also a tragedy fraught with **far-reaching** and **eternal** consequences. I speak of the great numbers of precious and eternal souls who for various reasons — none good and none justifiable — have chosen to drop-out of the race that leads to eternal life. They know that there are but two roads that one can travel in this life — Jesus said so: the straitened way that leads to life and the broad way that leads to destruction, with few in the former and **many** in the latter (Matthew 7:1-14).

Not only did our Savior make it possible for each one of us to be redeemed from his sins and to live a righteous and acceptable life in Christ, He also ordained local churches, intending that we work and worship together, helping each other, reaching out to others yet lost. One cannot really be a Christian without being an active, functioning member of a local congregation. We are to assemble together (Hebrews 10:25); we are to pool our monies (1 Corinthians 16:2; Acts 11:29; Philippians 4:15-18; 2 Corinthians 11:8-9); we are to come together to eat the Lord’s supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:33-34, 20); we are to edify one another (Ephesians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:11); we are to sing and pray together (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Acts 12:5, 12; 1 Timothy 2:8).

In spite of this, there are so many spiritual “drop-outs.” More than half who begin the spiritual race never finish, and most of those rationalize and try to justify their decision. They somehow convince themselves that they are doing the right thing and not sinning. For more than seventy years I have been listening to their excuses — each one thinking his or her case unique and his or her reasoning right, but I keep hearing those same old excuses over and over. And when I try to bring these erring brethren to their senses and fail, **it breaks my heart!**

One of the things that I keep encountering is the case of a brother or sister who is so focused on the here and now, as he or she distortedly views it, that he or she cannot focus at all on the eternal hereafter.

- * “I have some serious problems at home (or at work).”
- * “I’ve got some things that I need to work out that nobody else can work out for me, and it will just take some time.”
- * “I wasn’t really getting anything out of the classes and services.”
- * “My heart wasn’t really in it.”
- * “I was beginning to feel like a hypocrite, just going through the motions.”
- * “I felt it was better to quit than to go on like that”
- * “I haven’t forsaken God; I still try to live a good life, and I read my Bible.”
- * “We decided that it would be better if we started meeting in our home and having our own worship service.

Well the Bible deals with all of these things and provides us with the solutions, but the “drop-out” doesn’t want God’s help or God’s solutions, and certainly not the help of fellow-Christians. Is it really true that *the only other alternative* to the above situations is to quit? Is that the alternative that God would have us choose? **WHO WOULD DARE SAY THAT IT IS?** “If you really want to do something (like go to heaven — **BC**), you will find a way. If you really don’t want to do something (like being a faithful Christian — **BC**), you will find an excuse.”

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