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# Words of Truth

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## Spiritual Quicksand

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As Christians we should understand that God wants us to grow spiritually (Ephesians 4:14-15, Colossians 1:10, II Thessalonians 1:3, and II Peter 3:18). Therefore, we should never be at a stage in our spiritual lives wherein we find ourselves not making forward progress. Knowing that is one thing, doing it is an entirely different task. Remember, God expects us to be doers of His will (James 1:21-25). Thus, knowing what is expected is not the same as accomplishing what is expected.

So, as we go through our spiritual lives, we also know that there are going to be times wherein we are tried (James 1:12). Growing spiritual and facing spiritual trials at the same time can be difficult. It can be a good thing to go through trying times. The goal is to finish those trying times while remaining faithful to the Lord (Revelation 2:10). James, by way of inspiration, said this: *"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing"* (James 1:2-4).

We also know that it is possible for Christians, in times of temptation, to fall away (Luke 8:13). None of us are fall proof (I Corinthians 10:12). Babies in Christ can fall away (Acts 8:12-24). Leaders in the church can fall away (I Corinthians 9:27). Some can fall away quickly (Galatians 1:6-9). Even entire congregations can fall away (Revelation 2:1-7). Obviously, you cannot grow spiritually if you are falling back into sinful ways.

We know we need to grow. We know we will face times of difficulty in life. We know we have to be aware of the possibility of falling away. So, how do we continue to grow in the faith while we know there are going to be trying times ahead of us? Imagine you are walking through a forest. It is a dangerous forest. You have been told to be aware of dangerous animals and even human predators. So, your head is on a swivel (so to speak). You are looking everywhere. You have also been told that, amongst all the other things you need to be aware of, that there is quicksand in this forest. How are you going to avoid it with all of the other things you are looking for? The answer is both simple and complex. The answer includes watching, but it also involves awareness.

### Watch With Awareness

The word of God tells us to be watchful (I Corinthians 16:13 and Colossians 4:2). We are to watch for the coming of Christ (Matthew 24:42-43 and Matthew 25:13). We are to be on watch for things that can cause us to sin (Matthew 26:41). We are to be on watch for false teachers (Acts 20:28-31). Paul told Timothy to watch in all things (II Timothy 4:5). That sums it up nicely for us. We should never let our guard down. Like the little imaginative story about walking through a forest, we are

surrounded by danger spiritually and physically. We live in a sinful world (Galatians 1:3-4 and I John 5:19). If you are unaware of what to watch for you will find yourself in harms way without even knowing it.

Proper watching demands being aware (Philippians 3:1-2, Colossians 2:8, and II Peter 3:15-17) and being sober (I Thessalonians 5:6). When someone is looking to prey on you, they are often going to try and do so in a way that you will not be aware of (Galatians 2:4 and Jude 4). Sinful situations do not have warning signs posted in front of them. Things that will cause us to be trapped in sin are not going to warn us ahead of time with flashing lights. Like quicksand, you don't even realize you have entered into danger until you have started to sink. Sometimes, that is too late.

If you ignore the world we live in and the dangers therein you are sure to fall. Outside of ignoring what surrounds us, some people are just plain naïve. Being naïve is not a good thing. Naïve people believe anything they are told (Proverbs 14:15). Naïve people are not aware. They walk towards evil and do not take cover. Therefore, they find themselves in a state of punishment for their lack of awareness (Proverbs 22:3 and Proverbs 27:12). To avoid being naïve and to avoid falling for things we are not aware of, there are some tools that we can use to keep from falling.

### **God Has Provided Us With Quicksand Survival Tools**

We are sojourners in this world (I Peter 1:17). In our pilgrimage through this life, we are to avoid fleshly lusts that war against the soul (I Peter 2:11). These things are the types of quicksand we find in this world. There are several things we can pack on this journey to either avoid or get out of any spiritual quicksand we fall into. Remember, we are fully equipped for every good work (II Timothy 3:15-17).

The first thing in our survival bag is an obvious one. We should always have the word of God with us as we travel through the spiritual jungle of life (Psalms 1:1-2 and Psalms 119:97). If we hide the word of God in our hearts we will not sin (Psalms 37:31, Psalms 119:11, and Proverbs 2:10-11). Just like carrying food in a hikers backpack, we need the word of God to survive (Luke 4:4).

The second component each Christian needs as we enter into areas of danger is our brethren. Read this: *"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken"* (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). Don't enter into your spiritual journey alone. We have each other for help (Galatians 6:2). We watch for each other and keep each other accountable (Ezekiel 3:17-21). If you fall into quicksand, you can KNOW your brethren will pull you out (Galatians 6:1 and James 5:19-20).

### **Conclusion**

There is spiritual quicksand in life. Be aware. Be prepared. If you fall into that quicksand, you'd likely not even know it (Revelation 3:14-19). Don't ignore the warnings and fall away through pride (Proverbs 16:18) or ignorance (Ephesians 4:18). Be sober and aware (I Peter 5:8).