

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Refuse To Fall Through The Cracks

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In our tightly built modern homes, it might be hard for some to imagine the self made homes of the not so distant past. A shotgun farm house might have floors, but the wooden planks did not necessarily fit up tight to one another. It was not unusual to see spaces or cracks in the floor. Coins, buttons, eating utensils could easily plummet through the cracks if dropped to the floor. Falling through the openings, they then could be permanently lost.

The collectivity of God's people, known as the local church, is designed to be a caring and considerate people producing tight relationships. Members share a common salvation as they walk toward the same goal of heaven (*Jude 3, Philippians 3:14-15*). Because the members consider their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, they assemble together regularly to provoke love and promote good works in each other's lives (*Hebrews 10:24-25*).

How do you react if you do not feel a part of the local group? From your perspective, you desperately want to fit in, but seem to be constantly rebuffed by

others. You never feel part of the local group. What do you do? Make up your mind that you will not fall away, because of fallible people. Refuse to fall through the cracks created by negligence at best, or selfish inconsideration at worst. Refuse to let the character of others cause you to fall through the cracks to ruin. Remember the race that is before you has one object for you to look upon. No, it is not the acts of others, but the author and perfecter of our faith: Jesus (*Hebrews 12:2*).

Knowing the possibility of people falling through the cracks in any organization, we should strive to make sure our local church has no cracks for people, desirous of heaven, to fall through.

Each one of us should raise our eyes above our own heads to seek the well-being of others. We are not to be merely looking at our own things, “*but each of you also to the things of others*” (*Philippians 2:4*). Notice it is not one plank in the spiritual floor that is humble enough to consider the needs of others, but “*each of you*” so acting to make a tight fit, eliminating open cracks of not considering others. Is anyone visiting with them at services? Do

they seem to sit by themselves at gatherings of the members? I will make sure they feel welcomed. I will do my part to fill a crack.

Helping to insure that no soul falls through the cracks, God has authorized qualified men to serve the local congregation as “*bishops*” or “*overseers*” (*1 Peter 5:2, 1 Timothy 3*). God charges these men to “*watch*” for the well-being of the souls comprising the local group of which they are a member (*Hebrews 13:17*). With watchful eyes and caring hearts these shepherds can make sure every member feels welcomed and that their individual spiritual growth is important to the local group of Christians.

When visitors come our way, they could be looking for a place where people truly care for their souls. May each of us feel the responsibility to communicate with our friendly welcome that we are a church who refuses to let people fall through the cracks. Let us remember that we are one spiritual family, not groups of physical families only caring for their own. Reach out! Fill the cracks!