

Why Some People Quit

Dub McClish

Ever since the church began, some who obeyed the Gospel, thus being added by the Lord to the church, have failed to remain faithful (1 Cor. 15:58; 16:13; Gal. 6:9; Heb. 10:23–25; Rev. 2:10; et al.). Doubtless, some causes exist with which I'm not familiar, but I've heard several in the years I've been preaching the Gospel. Perhaps these I cite below will prevent some from dropping out, (or even cause some who have dropped out to return). I now mention some of the bases I have observed.

- 1. Guilt.** When one knows he is not living as Christ teaches us to live during the week, he **should** feel guilty and ashamed when he comes into his Bible class or into the worship assembly. His guilt and shame leave him with two choices: He can confess and repent of his sin, or he can continue in his guilt. One who continues in sin will not long remain faithful in attendance where his sin is going to be preached and taught against. Such a person will feel increasingly out of place and will eventually quit. Of course, "quitting the church" does not remove the guilt; it only removes one of the constant reminders of it. Many take this route.
- 2. Personality dislike for someone(s) in the congregation.** It may be the preacher, an elder, a teacher – it is often someone in a leadership role. We all have enough quirks to be unlikable to someone else (e.g., I don't like the behavior of those who quit because they don't like someone). Guess what? You don't have to **like** every member of the church to be a faithful Christian. God dislikes even the best of us, but He still **loves** us and seeks the best for us. Likewise, we can dislike and irritate one another at times, as long as we still love one another enough to seek the good of each other. "Quitting the church," thus losing one's soul, is a high price to pay because "I don't like someone."
- 3. There are hypocrites in the church.** I suppose all Christians (including preachers and elders) have been hypocrites (at least, inconsistent) at times. Even the best find it impossible to always live up to the message they preach, and sometimes they fail. The one who charges, "There are too many hypocrites," is doubtless himself hypocritical once in a while. I don't defend hypocrisy, but which is worse, to continue to faithfully assemble and work with other imperfect saints, knowing that one's own life is not perfect, or to drop out and not even make an effort to be faithful? Besides, the presence of one or a hundred hypocrites has nothing to do with my relationship to God unless I let it. Do we come to the assembly to judge our brethren or to worship God?

Many other "reasons" for quitting are observable, but they all stem from letting selfish pride or other sins get out of hand. When selfishness drops out, the quitter will drop back in.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Lighthouse*, weekly bulletin of Northpoint Church of Christ, Denton, TX, February 20, 2011, of which I was editor.]

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