

Hebrews 12:13b: Distractions Again Dislocate the Crippled

When you are in reversion recovery it is easy for distractions to cause your progress to be dislocated. The picture being drawn is of a physical problem limiting one's ability to move from point **a** to point **b**. If you are consistent in your exercise regimen in the gymnasium, then your momentum will sustain you and you will have a fairly easy time of keeping up the pace.

Having properly built up your body, the pressure of the exercise regimen may demand more and more of you, but your consistency and your momentum can handle the required tasks in stride. Such is the case for spiritual momentum. Consistency in the gymnasium of Christianity builds up endurance. Although the pressures of the Angelic Conflict may actually increase, your spiritual strength, built up over a long period of time, is able to handle these exigencies in stride.

But reversion recovery is much different from normal spiritual growth. Your old inventory of ideas and the old distractions which derailed you will act to dislocate your recovery.

In the early stages of recovery, you are weak and vulnerable in the sense that you need a great deal of doctrinal inventory in order to become self-sustaining. Whatever distracted you from the wheel-tracks of righteousness is ever present and fully capable of pulling you off again. Because you are weak and vulnerable to the old temptations, the sinful nature is also capable of introducing new ones. Thus, reversion recovery is very difficult and the believer is cautioned to stay in the wheel-tracks of righteousness so that he does not become dislocated.

There are many things today which offer the recovering believer temptations to return to his previous *modus operandi*. The two trends the sinful nature takes are either antinomianism, the tendency to lead lifestyle of licentiousness, or asceticism, the tendency to lead a lifestyle of legalism.

The antinomian, slowly but surely moves into areas of immoral arrogance which emphasize the desires of the flesh.

Antinomian theology is defined as follows by: **Elwell, Walter A. (ed.). *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984, pp. 57-58:**

It is not necessary for Christians to preach or obey the moral law of the Old Testament.

Some have taught that once persons are justified by faith in Christ, they no longer have any obligation toward the moral law because Jesus has freed them from it.

Since sin is inevitable anyway, there is no need to resist it.

There were those in the church at Corinth who taught that once people were justified by faith, they could engage in immorality since there was no longer any obligation to obey the moral law.

In the twentieth century some have viewed existentialist ethics, situation ethics, and moral relativism as forms of antinomianism because these either reject or diminish the normative force of moral law.

In essence, the antinomian rejects the concept of compliance with imperative moods as being legalistic.

On the other hand, the ascetic, slowly but surely moves into areas of moral arrogance which emphasize the desires of the emotional complex.

Self-righteousness enables the ascetic to self-justify his lifestyle as being virtually sinless. This is obviously self-deception and being out of touch with reality this leads to self-absorption.

The self-absorbed ascetic gives himself away in the following manner: he is always able to see the faults of others but never his own. Thus, while in reversionism, the ascetic judges the antinomian as being immoral while the antinomian judges the ascetic as being legalistic.

The interesting thing is both are right but each is equally unqualified to cast aspersions upon the other. Such inconsistency is born in the blind arrogance that is typical of the reversionistic thought pattern.

During reversion recovery, one's resolve to stay the course must be strong, consistent, and unwavering. There are certain distractions that can tempt the recovering reversionist to break his momentum:

1. Social life
2. Sexual life
3. Inordinate ambition to succeed
4. Pleasure
5. Entertainment
6. Relatives or family
7. Conflicts of interest
8. Divided loyalties.

Once the believer is tempted by such distractions, there are several problem areas which tend to get him off and keep him off the wheel-tracks of righteousness.