

It Happens To Frogs And Men

Hosea 7:9

Story Of The Frog.
Frog Seems Foolish.
Israel Was Not Aware.
Gradual Change Tells Story.

Like Hair Turning Gray.
Life Goes On
Slip Into Spiritual Decay.
Theif And Liar.



Deterioration Works Slow.
Were On Fire. **Acts 4:18-20.**
Did Attend Services. **Heb. 10:25.**
Did Give. **1 Cor. 16:1-2.**

Did Teach. **Matt. 28:18-**
Did Live. **James 4:4**
Did Follow God's Word. **Jno. 12:48.**
Don't Get Past Feeling. **Eph. 4:19.**

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INTRO: There is an old story, whether true or not I do not know, that says you cannot kill a frog by dropping him into boiling water. He reacts so quickly to the sudden heat that he jumps out before being hurt. However, if you put him in cold water and then warm it up gradually, he never notices the gradual change and is boiled to death before he will ever jump.

It may seem that the frog is very foolish, but did you ever stop to think about men? Israel had so mingled with other nations that she suffered disaster. She was slowly but surely swallowed up. Her wealth was taken away by taxes. Her morals were destroyed by the heathen, and false gods contaminated her religion. This did not happen over night; it came a little at a time. It was so gradual that she was not aware it was taking place.

Israel was gradually being sapped of her spiritual strength by the constant influence of the surrounding world. It is the gradual change that tells the story. She would have rebelled at a sudden change! She should have been able to see her decaying condition, but she was completely unaware of her deterioration. Like Israel and like the frog, this very thing can happen to us. How can we slip from earnestly living the Christian life into a condition of spiritual decay without knowing it? Let us see if we can learn.

- I. WE CANNOT SEE OUR OWN FAULTS AS EASILY AS WE SEE OTHERS.
 - A. Jesus taught this fact. Matt. 7:1-54.
 - B. Self-love, or self-conceit, often keeps us from an impartial appraisal of self. 2 Sam. 12:1. Because of this fault, no doubt, Jesus taught us to love our neighbors as our own selves. John 13:34-35; 1 Pet. 4:8.
 - C. To find out if we are guilty or not of this fault, we should examine ourselves in the light of God's word and pray the Father to cleanse and forgive our sins. Psa. 139:23-24.
- II. UNCONSCIOUSNESS OF SPIRITUAL DECAY MAY BE DUE TO GRADUAL BACKSLIDING.
 - A. If our hair turned gray overnight, we could not help being aware of it. Because the change comes gradually, we pay little attention to the transformation. Each day seems like the one just past or the one to follow.
 - B. Pictures taken at different periods of life show what great changes take place. Each picture shows correctly the way one looks at the time it was taken, but when put side by side they show the vast changes that take place in life. Looking at pictures with the young people, they say, "surely that wasn't you; you were so thin and your hair was so black." When I looked in the mirror and at the picture it is shocking. What changes have occurred, and they have taken place more and more as we grow older. Did you ever see pictures of your

grandparents when they were children, or first married, and then just before they died. You cannot believe they are the same people.

- C. This change is true of the external man. How much more of the spiritual man or inward man. The inward man changes step by step. The late Senator Ward Carmack said, "An act oft repeated hardens into a habit, and a habit long continued petrifies into character." What we are has come about slowly; what we can be will come the same way.

III. UNCONSCIOUSNESS OF BACKSLIDING MAY OFTEN BE DUE TO INTEREST IN OTHER MATTERS.

- A. Illustration: A business man gives more and more time to his business and less and less time to spiritual development. When night comes he is too tired to review his own life in the light of God's Word and ask for forgiveness and guidance. If he assembles on the Lord's Day, many times he resent the plain teaching of the Scriptures. He goes away angry at the truth, rather than dissatisfied with himself.
- B. If this condition goes on, evil increases and soon the gray hairs of spiritual decay are upon him. Luke 8:14.
- C. How may this danger be overcome? Either curtail the business or consecrate it as a whole to the Lord. When a man is too busy to serve God, he is too busy. A man never failed who took God into his partnership. Matt. 6:33

CONCL: Spiritual decay comes slowly, like decay in the tooth. We can grow weak spiritually without knowing it. Self-examination each day will prevent it. Do I love God as much as I once did? Am I studying? Do I teach others? Does God come first in my life? Remember it comes slowly: It Happens to Frogs and Men.