

How Do We Avoid Our Christian Life From Going Stale?

It is a rare Christian who has **not** experienced times of spiritual dullness when the excitement of Bible Study has faded.

Or when the seeking to be a light to all we meet and salt to savour the lives of other people who are experiencing trials, has waned or even departed from our day-to-day living.

There is no single cause for this stale condition, nor is there one simple remedy for it.

Sometimes we have only ourselves to blame for the deteriorating condition.

Perhaps when we sin we have **not** immediately sought forgiveness and cleansing.

Perhaps we have permitted worldly interests to choke out our zeal for maturing in our Christian life.

When the cause of our condition is known and uncomplex such as above, the remedy is simply to repent.

But if, after careful examination of our life by prayer and study of the Christian Bible, no real reason for our staleness is discovered, repentance will not solve our problem.

1 John 1:8 [NIV] *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”*

To say we have not sinned when we have is to be false to the facts.

1 John 1:9 [NIV] *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

To insist we have sinned when we haven't, is to be false to ourselves.

There does come a time when the most spiritual thing to do is just to accept cleansing from Jesus Christ for all our sins as an accomplished fact and stop calling unclean which God has called clean.

One often unsuspected cause of spiritual staleness is physical fatigue

It is possible to be a weary saint.

But it is scarcely possible to be excessively weary and still feel and act saintly.

Any Christian who gets tired doing the work of his Saviour and Lord and is without relief, will eventually go stale.

Mark 6:30-32 [NIV] *“The apostles gathered round Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, **“Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”** So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.”*

Jesus Christ knew this need for physical rest after a period of pressurised toil and took his disciples to a quiet place to recover.

At times like the above the most *“spiritual”* thing to do is to have a period of physical rest.

Another reason some of us become jaded is a life that is monotonous

The repetitive use of set services as found in the Church of England Book of Common Prayer can detract from the real goal of the scriptures and creeds included.

The result can be spiritual boredom leading to a staleness that chokes out any progress in spiritual maturing.

Remember when God was dealing with Israel in the wilderness, He kept them moving.

I wonder how much worse would have been their rebellion if they had camped in one place for forty years?

To break off from prayer and study after an extended period, to take a walk or cultivate our garden, will renew us mentally and physically, yet still remain in the presence of our Creator, through experiencing part of His physical creation.

Such a break will assist the Holy Spirit to continue with our spiritual creation.

To stay free from religious mental weariness we should be careful not to get into a rut, not even a good rut!

Matthew 6:7 [King James] *“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.”*

Our Saviour warned against vain repetitions.

Often-repeated prayers become vain when they have lost their topical urgency.

We need to examine our prayers every now and again to discover how much sincerity and spontaneity they possess.

Prayer should be simple, candid, fresh and original

Never seek to induce *“holy emotions”* in our prayerful conversation with our Creator.

In conclusion we can keep from going spiritually stale by –

Getting proper physical rest.

Practising complete candour in our prayers.

By introducing variety into our lives.

By heeding God’s call to move on.

By exercising quiet faith at all times.