Sleeping on the Edge

**Read:** Acts 20:7-12

**Text:** Matthew 26:40 “And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?”

**Introduction:** This is a story that usually goes unnoticed when we read the scriptures. Sometimes someone will mention it when comp-laining or joking about a preacher who goes too long but it is not a scripture that attracts much examination. We read about poor Eutychus

who fell asleep because Paul didn’t know when he should stop. There is a greater message here and I’d like to talk about it.

**I. Be careful where you sit.** Eutychus chose to sit in a dangerous place. The story does not tell us why. Maybe he had good reasons. Perhaps the room was crowded. Maybe there was an empty seat beside some-one whom he didn’t know or maybe it was someone he did not want to sit beside. It is possible that it was hot and he just wanted to feel the cool air from the window. Regardless of the reason there are some things that need to be considered. 1). He was as close to the outside that he could be while still claiming to be on the inside. Do you know anyone who has said that they’ll be happy to get into heaven by the skin of their teeth? There are some who live as close to the world as they can and still try to claim saint status. 2). His position led to his plight. He would never have fallen if he had sat somewhere else. Regardless of your justification for being in a situation where you fall hindsight always reveals that a better choice could and should have been made. 3). Being in church doesn’t provide immunity from falling.

Some of the most ardent atheists are from the church.

**II. Be careful where you relax**. The soldier will tell you that the lush, green, well watered valley is the best place for an ambush. Many a soldier has removed his boots and placed his feet in the cool stream just before being struck by a snipers bullet. There is a sense of safety and security in church. There is trust and hope found in this place but the danger is that we can let down our guard here. Every single one of the cults has been started by someone from a Bible believing church. Jim Jones was a Pentecostal pastor before leading hundreds to their death. David Berg was a Bible believing Baptist before starting the Children of God Cult. Joseph Smith was raised in church. Charles Taze Russel came from a protestant family. Being in church is commendable but there is not a guarantee that you will not fall even in church. Keep an eye on your pastor. Read the Word for yourself. And commit yourself to the Word first and then the church.

**III. Eutychus made some right choices:** 1). He was in a place of great light. The 8th verse says: “…there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.” When you fall, in the light, you can find your way back. Many is the lost child who will testify that it was the light he/she was exposed to in childhood that brought them, finally, back to their faith. 2). He was surrounded by believers. I knew a man once who rented an apartment on a third floor. There was no insulation between the floors. He didn’t have to pay a heating bill because he benefitted from the heat loss of his neighbors. He said that in the winter he sometimes had to open his window because it was so warm in his apartment. There are great benefits of surrounding yourselves with believers. For Eutychus it meant that after his fall he would be surrounded by praying; believing saints. If you are lost there in no better place to be than with people who know the way that you need to go to.

**Conclude:** When Eutychus was restored to life it brought comfort to the saints. If the story of someone being born again does not make you happy then I doubt if you are really saved. I am happy to hear the excuse for not going to church that there are too many hypocrites there. I always respond that there is no better place for the hypocrite to be. The hypocrite is lost and, at least, in church he/she will be in a place to hear and respond to the gospel. If you don’t like hypocrites in the church then you will not like them in eternity either and in eternity they will reside in hell. Eutychus was made alive because of the saints with which he surrounded himself.