

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

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Defecting from sin

Natalie Elphicke, a Tory MP, recently moved to the Labour Party following Labour's victories in local elections. Another Conservative MP had crossed the floor to join Labour. These political switches are unusual, but Natalie Elphicke has followed in the footsteps of former Tory minister Dan Poulter, who recently switched to Labour.

Elphicke, the MP for Dover, defected just days after Poulter, fuelling speculation ahead of Prime Minister's Questions on small boat crossings in the Channel.

While defections are uncommon, when they do occur, they cause a stir in Westminster, which is famed for its tribal affiliations. They bolster the morale of the receiving party while dealing a substantial damage to the party left behind, particularly when the transition is from the ruling party to the main opposition.

Such measures underline the opposition's bigger goal of persuading recent Conservative voters to endorse Labour. The words of the defecting MPs are especially devastating considering their past devotion.

Labour intends to maintain its current candidate for Dover and Deal in the next general election, and Elphicke will not run. Nonetheless, Keir Starmer will enjoy the visuals of Elphicke joining him in the House of Commons. During Prime Minister's Questions, Conservative MPs were visibly perplexed and confused, since many had no idea Elphicke was suddenly sitting behind Starmer.

A senior Conservative source expressed astonishment at the switch, implying that Elphicke's voters would be equally astonished given her prior immigration attitude. They also pointed out that her social media background is filled with critiques of Labour, the party she currently represents.

As Christians, moving away from sin necessitates an intentional and ongoing effort to align with God's will. This process, known as repentance, entails honest self-examination, confession, and an openness to change. In Act 3:19 it says, *“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.”*

This week let us endeavour to live righteously and accepting God's grace, as we defect from sin to holiness.
