**The Backslider**

Introduction:

We assume that a backslider is someone who once knew God and then walked away. But that is not always the case. There are many that sit on pews and never miss a service. They pay tithes and give offerings and will give anything to help others.

But! The dictionary defines a backslider as someone who lapses into previous undesirable patterns of behavior or a person who transgresses moral or civil law or to relapse into bad habits, sinful behavior, or undesirable activities.

* If we were once mighty in prayer and aren’t now what are we?
* If we were once led of the Spirit but aren’t now what are we?
* If you once obeyed the Pastor and don’t now what are you?

When a person backslides turns back to their former evil ways it is a shame because you are saying "God I didn’t find you interesting enough to follow."  What you are doing is mocking God to the world, you are saying "I enjoy the pleasures of sin more than the things of God."

God will be especially hard on those who follow their own evil, lustful thoughts and those who are proud and willful, daring even to scoff at the Glorious One without so much as trembling,

2 Peter 2:20-22 tells us this and when a person has escaped from the wicked ways of the world by learning about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then gets tangled up with sin and becomes its slave again, he is worse off than he was before.

21 It would be better if he had never known about Christ at all than to learn of him and then afterwards turn his back on the holy commandments that were given to him.

22 There is an old saying that "A dog comes back to what he has vomited and a pig is washed only to come back and wallow in the mud again." That is the way it is with those who turn again to their sin. II Peter 2: 22

*A backslider will no longer follow instructions, but go after their own ways.*

Every generation has suffered people who say they are following Christ but by their fruits you can see that they don’t.

There are many things that can hinder our spiritual growth and put us on the road to sliding back away from the Lord, His Will and Purpose for our lives.

The Lord wants up to live in victory, being an over comer and to bring Glory to Him. We must be on guard and be faithful.

If a disciple like Peter could lose out, we either have to be much stronger in Lord than He or we must avoid the pitfalls that he fell into.

We want to grow not dry out in the Lord.

The process of backsliding is a gradual one, often overtaking a person by surprise. That was one of the things that caused the Apostle Peter to deny Jesus?

Could it been because he slept instead of praying. Mark 14:37-38 Simon, sleepest thou? Could you not thou watch one hour?

Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

The Spirit prompts us to pray but the flesh desires us to sleep and therefore without prayer you fall.

1. You are heading for trouble when you start losing your desire to be in the house of God.

2. When you lose your desire to worship.

3. When you lose interest in the word of God.

4. Or church becomes boring.

Most people today refuse to follow the instruction to pray and therefore they sit in church and can’t focus because they are in the flesh and not the spirit.

Jesus was the leader of twelve men he called disciples, when they obeyed him he blessed them, when they didn’t they fell into temptation.

People can backslide and never know it.  They can believe they are in the perfect will of God.

*Peters lack of diligent preparation, which caused him to be caught off guard for what was to follow, his denial that he even knew Christ.*

*The same thing can happen to us!*

Luke 21:34-36 (KJV) 34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

The Living Bible translation: Luke 21:34-36

"Watch out! Don't let my sudden coming catch you unawares; don't let me find you living in careless ease, carousing and drinking, and occupied with the problems of this life, like all the rest of the world.

36 Keep a constant watch. And pray that if possible you may arrive in my presence without having to experience these horrors."

Hebrews 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was [confirmed](http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/backsliding-how-does-one-become-a-backslider-tony-abram-sermon-on-christian-disciplines-139450.asp?page=2) unto us by them that heard him;

But when we are proud of ourselves, we become lazy and deny Jesus.

Without diligent preparation, we too can become guilty of Cowardice!

a. Ashamed to be seen carrying a Bible.

b. Ashamed to be seen giving thanks.

c. Ashamed to be seen with other Christians.

d. Perhaps even ashamed to let others know that we are

Christians!

e. Ashamed to bow our hearts and ask Grace over our food.

*Peter found himself warming up with the world and denied he even knew Jesus.*

Mark 14-68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch and the cock crew.

*Though we may never actually deny Jesus in "words", we can easily backslide to the point of denying Him in "action"...*

a. We are called to worship Him...but make excuses why we

cannot.

b. We are called to serve Him...but render little or no

service.

c. We are called to stand by His side and suffer for His name ...but stand afar off in the safety of the world’s comfort.

1 Peter 2:11 (KJV) Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

When you try to live as close to the world as you can you are backslid!

You cannot love the world and the things of the world If you are going to be Jesus Disciple.

1 John 2:15-17

15 Love not the world , neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: ***but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.***

Prov 4:13

Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

There is one thing that every leader has to face and that is rebellion, every leader from the beginning of time suffered with rebellion. People hate to be told what to do.

Moses dealt with this continually trying to save people who didn’t want to be saved. They wanted freedom but they wanted it their way.

Israel kept looking back at Egypt and never could break free so that meant they were still in Bondage.

You can hate sin and still sit in the church and refuse to go forward, refuse to pray refuse to give, refuse to sacrifice, refuse to obey the Pastor but you won’t make it to heaven.

If you are steadily looking back you will never make it to the promise land.