

BACKSLIDING - Pt.3 - Why Do People Backslide ?

Int.

1. Aim: To discuss some of the reasons why people fall into the trap of backsliding, and how to prevent it.
2. Jeremiah 8:5. "Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return."
3. Heb. 12:1-3
4. Backsliding
 - a. The problem - heartbreaking
 - i. Possibility
 - ii. Probability
 - iii. Prevalence
 - b. Who is a Backslider?
 - i. One who goes back into sin
 - ii. One who has left his first love
 - iii. One who becomes occupied with things.
 - c. Why do people backslide?
 - d. The way home for a backslider
5. Why Do people backslide and what can we do to prevent it?
 - a. There are various causes and we will notice just a few of the more general ones
 - b. Then we will give some instructions on how to keep from backsliding.

Discussion

I. CAUSES FOR BACKSLIDING

A. SATAN'S ATTACKS

1. The devil attacks a person in his weakest spot
2. Heb. 12:1-3 "Besetting sin" = ensnares - entangles
3. Notice Simon's temptation - Acts 8:9-21
4. A person who has been a heavy drinker will be tempted to drink
5. Those who have a hot temper will be tempted with impatience
6. The Devil strikes where people are the weakest. He is able to regain many.

B. AN IMPURE HEART can cause us to backslide

1. Mt. 5:8 "Blessed [are] the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
2. Pro. 4:23 "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."
3. An impure heart will make us think evil of others
 - a. We will be suspicious of others and their actions
 - b. We will attribute evil motives to other church members
 - c. This will cause confusion, hatred, hurt feelings and unforgiveness
 - d. Gal. 5:15 "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."
4. An impure heart can cause us to backslide and others also

C. **FALSE TEACHERS** can cause us to backslide

1. Paul warned the Galatians about this danger

a. Gal. 1:6-9 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7. Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

b. Gal. 3:1 "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"

c. Gal. 5:7 "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" Hinder = interfered = W.E.B.

2. False teachers can confuse and cause us to backslide

a. Eph. 4:11-15

b. Those immature and unstable are easy victims for any false teacher

c. They either cause us to follow their doctrines or we get so confused we just quit because we are not able to answer their false doctrines.

D. **EVIL COMPANIONS** cause many to backslide

1. I Cor. 15:33 NKJV "Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

2. Sometimes when young people go away to college or just away from home they get in with the wrong crowd.

3. Close companionship --or friendship-- with those who are evil causes us to look at vice with less horror.
4. We then become less watchful and cautious
5. It could be a close friend, or a spouse, or someone with whom we work.
6. Before too long we will practice those things which are evil -- or we backslide
7. Solomon is an example of how this can happen –
 - a. I Kings 11:1-4 “But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; 2. Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. 3. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. 4. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.”
 - b. Neh. 13:26 “Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless even he did outlandish women cause to sin.” [Outlandish = foreign in ASV Pagan in NKJV]

E. **PLEASURES OF SIN** cause many to backslide

1. Heb. 11:24-25 -- we cannot deny there is some pleasure in sin!! "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25. Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;"
2. Often Christians will think about the "good old times" they had before they became Christians
 - a. They become weak and yield to the temptation to return to the world.
 - b. They lose their love for God and their longing for heaven!
 - c. Bible study and worship services become dull and very disinteresting to them.
 - d. They want fun and pleasure "now"!!!
3. You cannot love both -- so they just change their love - and soon they backslide!! --
Mt. 6:24

F. **EARTHLY INTERESTS** cause many to forget God

1. Lk. 8:14 -- thorny soil = choked by cares and riches and pleasures of this life
"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of[this] life, and bring no fruit to perfection."
2. When a person gets interested in earthly gain rather than heavenly treasures, it is just a matter of time until they backslide
3. It is so easy to fall into this sin trap
 - a. Everyone wants to get ahead
 - b. There is so much emphasis on material things

4. I Tim. 6:10 ASV "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

a. Erred from the faith KJV = backsliding "led astray from the faith"

b. Why ? Love of Money!!

G. **BECOMING DISCOURAGED** is one of the major causes of backsliding

1. Gal. 6:9 -- weary in well doing - some just get tired of the Christian life "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

2. Sometimes people feel that no one cares about them and they just quit

3. Others get discouraged over some other Christian who has set a bad example

4. Sometimes "church trouble" and quarrels will cause a person to become so disgusted that they quit or backslide

5. It is sometimes the case that a church is small and it is difficult to convert others, and all the work is on a few people and some of them get discouraged and backslide.

H. These are just a few of the many reasons or causes of people backsliding. The devil has many weapons to use on Christians to try to get them back. He always strikes where people are weakest, and he is able to regain many!

II. HOW TO PREVENT BACKSLIDING

- A. We not only try to restore the backsliders -- but we should try to prevent them from backsliding
1. Matt. 28:20 we are to teach our converts how to observe all things "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen."
 2. This is God's plan for preventing backsliding
 - a. Eph. 4:11-15
 - b. II Pet. 3:18 -- grow "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."
 - c. II Pet. 1:5-11 if ye do these things ye shall never fall
- B. Some suggestions that will help prevent backsliding
1. **REMOVE OCCASIONS OF STUMBLING**
 - a. Christians should set the proper example before new converts
 - b. Rom. 14:21 NKJV "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."
 - c. A clean congregation can stem the tide of backsliding
 - d. Get sin out of the camp and keep it out
 2. **BRETHREN MUST BE BROTHERLY**
 - a. We should help and encourage one another as true brothers in Christ
 - b. The Bible teaches us to exhort one another
 - (1) Heb. 13:1 "Let brotherly love continue."

(2) Rm. 12:15 "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

(3) Gal. 6:2 NKJV "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.."

(4) Heb. 3:13 "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

c. If Christians really cared for each other as they should then we could help each other.

3. **AN ACTIVE CHURCH** will help prevent backsliding

a. A congregation that is winning souls and growing spiritually will have fewer backsliders

b. Mk. 16:15-16

c. If the congregation is really absorbed in serving Christ, and it is working the devil will have trouble getting an advantage and backsliding will be reduced.

4. **GOOD TEACHING** is something the church must have

a. I I Tim. 4:2 "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Instant = ready

b. Teaching and preaching God's word will prevent backsliding

(1) Today many preachers are ashamed of the Bible and therefore use it sparingly

(2) Some preach a whole sermon and make only a slight reference to the Word of God

- c. Proper preaching and teaching will give:
 - (1) Encouragement when it is needed
 - (2) Rebuke when it is needed
 - (3) Instruction when it is needed
 - (4) Comfort when it is needed
 - (5) Challenge when it is needed
- d. II Tim. 3:16-17 every congregation needs good plain Bible teaching

CONCLUSION

1. Poem -- "A FENCE OR AN AMBULANCE"
2. To prevent Christians from falling is better than trying to restore them. Better to prevent than restore
3. If a backslider dies in that condition he will miss heaven and be cast into hell
4. I Tim. 4:8 ASV "for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come."
5. Luke 8 parable of the sower
 - a. Stony & Rocky = represent backsliders
 - b. Good soil = represents a good heart