

## THE BACKSLIDER

Proverbs 14:14

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** Ever believer/Christian has questions at times about his/her faith and certain things about the Bible. There are times when one is excited, busy and productive in Church activities and in his/her own particular calling of the Lord. However, there are times when Christians seem to lose interest and lose involvement and slack off in their Church activities and also become slack in their devotion and prayer time. To "backslide" is to lapse morally from a spiritual level. There is no question as to the believer's security in his/her salvation for once one belongs to God through belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, he/she is permanently a child of God. However there are lapses in one's Christian behavior and that is what "backsliding" is about.

### I. WHAT BACKSLIDING IN THE HEART IS

1. It is taking back one's consecration to God and His service that proves one has been saved.
2. It is the believer/Christian leaving his/her "first love" which is the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. It is the Christian withdrawing him/herself from devotion to God and turning once again to self interest.
4. One can keep up the "form" of his/her Church practices but his/her heart is not in it anymore.

### II. EVIDENCES OF A BACKSLIDDEN HEART

1. A Christian who appears to still be active in religious matters, but it is done in formality/habit not from the heart.
2. A lack of enjoyment in one's religious activities.
3. Acting, feeling like one HAS/MUST do Church, religious things.
4. A Christian has an ungoverned temper. Irritable, uncontrolled temper, upset over the least thing.
5. An attitude of uncharitableness. A lack of confidence in the good intentions of others and failing to become involved in beneficial to others things.
6. A Christian who is always finding fault with others and blaming others for this or that. A state of mind that is harsh in judging others.
7. When there is a lack of interest in God's Word it is evidence that one's heart is backslidden. When one's heart is full of love, the Bible is the most precious thing around.
8. A lack of interest in secret prayer is indicative of one being in a backslidden condition. Anytime one loses interest in praying (talking with the Lord), and his/her thoughts are focused on his/her business or other things rather than the Lord, his/her heart is backslidden.
9. If there is a lack of interest in seeing people saved that reveals a heart of indifference and certainly not the heart that a loving, active, Christian has and that person has backslidden.
10. A lack of interest in revivals and soul winning efforts by one's own Church and other Churches is indicative of a backslidden heart.
11. A lost of interest in missions and missionary work, the conversion of others in foreign countries is a sign of a backslidden heart.
12. The loss of interest in helping others less fortunate is a sign of a backslidden heart.
13. The loss of interest in discussing spiritual matters is evidence of a backslidden heart.
14. The loss of interest in talking with others who are highly spiritual is a sign of a backslidden heart.
15. The loss of interest in restoring one's interest in spiritual matters is a sign of a backslidden heart.
16. The loss of interest in the newly saved is a sign of a backslidden heart.
17. To pick at, criticize and censure other believers is a sign of a backslidden heart.
18. The loss of a spirit of prayer is indicative of a backslidden heart.
19. To pray with an attitude of self-condemnation is indicative of a backslidden heart.

20. Praying for one's own self, excluding friends and others is indicative of a backslidden heart.
21. Failing to attend designated prayer times for special occasions is indicative of a backslidden heart.
22. Neglecting family devotion, prayer time is evidence of a backslidden heart.
23. When one looks upon private prayer as a duty rather than a privilege, that person's heart is backslidden.
24. Giving up prayer and bible study for television and other entertainment is indicative of a backslidden heart.
25. Spiritual blindness, a lack of interest in God's Word as a guide for one's life is an indication of a backslidden heart.
26. To be more concerned about worldly matters/affairs over religious matters is a sign of a backslidden heart.
27. When one seeks to gratify his/her own personal passions and appetites , it is a clear sign of a backslidden heart.
28. A seared conscience (one's conscience is silent) is indicative of a backslidden heart.
29. Loose moral principles is indicative of a backslidden heart.
30. Fearing what others think more than what God thinks is a sign of a backslidden heart.

### **III. CONSEQUENCES OF A BACKSLIDDEN HEART**

1. A person with a backslidden heart will be filled with his/her own dead works.
2. A person with a backslidden heart will be filled with his/her own feelings.
3. A person with a backslidden heart will be filled with his/her own prejudices, no willingness to know and do the truth.
4. A person with a backslidden heart will allow him/herself become vexed and angry with others if they act or say anything contrary to what one thinks.
5. A person with a backslidden heart will stumble and fall over his/her own mistakes.
6. A person with a backslidden heart will be filled with his/her own appetites, desires and passions.
7. A person with a backslidden heart can't control his/her own tongue and will be filled with his/her own words, wanting to talk about ME or MY all the time.
8. A person with a backslidden heart will run into temptation and fall all the time.
9. A person with a backslidden heart will stumble and fall over his/her own foolishness.
10. A person with a backslidden heart will not find peace and rest from all his/her troubles.
11. A person with a backslidden heart will turn back to selfishness, thinking only of him/herself first.
12. A person with a backslidden heart will always be perplexed about what to do or not do.
13. A person with a backslidden heart will be constantly anxious about all matters that pertain to him/herself.
14. A person with a backslidden heart will always seem to be disappointed.
15. A person with a backslidden heart will be full of personal losses (all things are his/hers, not God's).
16. A person with a backslidden heart will find religious matters boring and thus become a burden.
17. A person with a backslidden heart will be constantly irritable and explosive.
18. A person with a backslidden heart will feel all the eyes of the world upon him/her focusing on all his/her weaknesses, etc.
19. A person with a backslidden heart will wander into false delusions of doctrines and religious matters.
20. A person with a backslidden heart will try to maintain some religious connection with his/her Church but feel guilty, therefore he/she will omit many things.
21. A person with a backslidden heart he/she will feel condemned for everything for he/she knows his/her heart is not really into spiritual matters anymore.

#### **IV. HOW TO RECOVER FROM BACKSLIDING**

1. Remember from where you once were. Deliberately contrast your present situation with the one where you were right with God and walked with Him.
2. Stop trying to explain away your reasons and motives for leaving the Lord in the first place.
3. Repent immediately and return to what you were doing before you backslid.
4. Do not try to return by changing your outside conduct. Begin with your heart and get right with God.
5. Do not try to excuse your actions to God and think that you must do this or that before you and God will be back together. Remember that you are no better now than you were when you first came to the Lord Jesus for salvation. Throw yourself upon God's mercy and return to Him.
6. Do not think that you all things are still well between you and God for if your conscience is condemning you, you know for certain that God ought to condemn you as well. Come to the Lord Jesus at once, like the guilty sinner you are, taking all the shame, blame, and wanderings upon yourself.
7. As there is but one way for a lost sinner to be saved and that is through believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of one's sins, so it is with the backslidden Christian. It is still to the Lord Jesus Christ one must come, repenting of all one's sins and asking for forgiveness.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Every Christian has the potential to become a "backslider."
2. Anytime a Christian allows anything or anybody to come between himself/herself and the Lord Jesus, there is the possibility of that Christian becoming "backslid."
3. Backsliding happens slowly, unnoticably, without the Christian even being aware of what is happening.
4. Getting a Christian to backslide is Satan's way of rendering a Christian useless for the Lord.
5. Take a look at YOURSELF Christian. What priority does the Lord Jesus have in YOUR life? What is your attitude toward spiritual/religious matters?
6. Could it possibly be that YOU have backslidden?
7. Every Christian needs to renew his/her allegiance to the Lord Jesus everyday, deliberately, with all his/her heart.
8. IF YOU are backslidden, then go to the Lord Jesus and confess what you have become and repent of all that you have done and are doing that is contrary to His ways and how you should be living as a Christian. Then get active again in the things of the Lord.