



# The Voice Of Truth

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### “The Sin of Backsliding”

Jimmy Pettigrew

Backsliding is a subject of great concern among all of God's faithful children. The average church is reeling with names that have gone back into sin.

Who is a backslider? No person can be described as a backslider who has not first been born into the family of God (John 3:3-5). "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (Isaiah 1:2-4). Who is a backslider? He is one who has gone backward instead of forward. He is one who was once obedient to the Lord, but has now forsaken Him. He is one who has gone back into the ways of the world (2 Timothy 4:10). He is one who left his First Love (Rev. 2:4). Now, if one is born again and returns to cursing, drinking, and worldliness, if he stops reading his Bible, praying, attending, and showing concern for the lost, then he has **BACKSLIDDEN!**

**WHY DO WE BACKSLIDE?** (1) Because of a weakness of the flesh (Matthew 26:41; Galatians 5:17). (2) Because of our love for money (1 Timothy 6:10; Acts 5:1-11). (3) Success causes some to backslide. (4) Comfort causes some to backslide; they decide that the Christian life is too demanding. (5) Pleasures causes some to backslide (Hebrews 11:24-26). (6) Evil companions cause backsliding (1 Corinthians 15:33). (7) Some backslide because they have been offended. (8) A job causes some to backslide. (9) Excuses cause many to backslide. (10) Entertainment has caused some to backslide.

Backslider, you are in for a lot of grief and heartache! The Bible warns (Jeremiah 2:19): "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee; and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forgotten the Lord thy God." The Bible plainly teaches that the hand of the Lord will be heavy on the backslider. Grief came to David because of his sin with Bathsheba (Psalm 51). God's hand was heavy upon Cain when he sinned (Genesis 4:13). The prodigal son illustrates the grief and misery of the backslider (Luke 15). Consider what your backsliding will cost you: (1) Your good influence. (2) Self-respect and the respect of others. (3) It will cost you your fellowship with fellow Christians. (4) It will cost you your fellowship and favor with God. (5) Your greatest loss will be your soul (Matthew 16:26).

Backslider, here is how you can come back to God. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7).

Consider the way you once walked with God and compare that with your present walk. Realize the condition existing between you and God at this moment. Repent and turn immediately. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James 5:16).

Are you aware of your backslidden condition? Samson was not aware of his (Judges 16:20). The five foolish virgins thought everything was all right (Matthew 25:1-13). The elder brother thought he was in good shape (Luke 15:25-32). Many at the judgment will be surprised (Matthew 7:21-23). Have you examined yourself carefully in the mirror of God's Word to see yourself as you really are and as you ought to be (James 1:22-25)? Paul writes, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Prove yourselves. Do you not know yourselves ... (2 Corinthians 13:5)? Have you examined yourself carefully today to see whether or not you are a backslider? If you are and are willing to admit it, then come home today for salvation.

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## **SEVEN STEPS TO HUMILITY (Philippians 2:1-11)**

1. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit.
  2. Count others better than yourselves.
  3. Look not only to your own interests.
  4. Look also to the interests of others.
  5. Empty yourselves.
  6. Take the form of a servant.
  7. Become obedient unto death. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
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## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear and Learn** - Rom. 10:17; John 6:45; 17:3

**Believe** - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

**Repent** - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

**Confess the Lord** - Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10

**Be Baptized** - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:21

**Continue in the Apostles' Teaching** - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17