

The Backslider

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 January 2019

[0 : 00] We thank you for your word and our gathering together tonight again, Lord, for your grace to prevail, for your spirit to work in hearts, Lord, for your word to work its work.

Lord, let us tremble at it and take it in and learn from it, Lord, for your glory. In Jesus' name, amen. Tonight I'm looking at the backslider, the backslider, and we're going to look at five different things. Firstly, a definition, the danger of backsliding, the cause of backsliding, not backsliding, the effects of backsliding, and the solution for backsliding.

So five things about backsliding. Now, I'm sure there's no backsliders present. This applies to everybody else. But we can learn about backsliders and how to avoid being one, hopefully.

Now, a backslider, firstly, a definition. And we could say many things about a backslider, about someone who is backsliding. But here's some definitions to offer to you.

[1 : 01] A backslider is one whose faith has become careless. A backslider is one whose faith has become careless. There's a spiritual ignorance there.

He is out of fellowship with the Lord. The backslider. Some examples we could think through the scriptures. There's many pictures of backsliders, of the failure and sin of God's people.

It's a recurring theme, backsliding. For example, Noah. The Lord marvellously worked in his life.

He's found grace in God's eyes. He stepped off the ark and then he got drunk. Shame. Lot. He took up residence at Sodom, of all places, of all the places he could have chosen.

Lot. Moses. Moses. Moses got angry and dishonoured God. He struck the rock. Rather than speak to it. David committed adultery.

[2 : 08] What a reproach. Samson, a judge of Israel who had been filled with the Holy Ghost, was a Nazarite from birth, kept company with Harlots, until God left him powerless, a slave of the Philistines, with his eyes burnt out.

Even Peter. Peter, who had walked with the Lord for three years in intensive training from the Master of Masters, the Lord of Lords.

And after those three years yet, he denied Christ and cursed and swore. All the disciples, it says of them, they forsook him and fled.

What a tragic tale of many lives. Backsliding. The saints of the Bible fell into sin. And the sin of backsliding.

May none of us get to such a point that we ever think, it cannot happen to me. It cannot ever happen to me. Because the word tells us, as Paul writes to the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 10 verse 12, Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

[3 : 24] To think, oh, it could never happen to me. Some would dismiss the backslider as a hopeless case.

Yet thankfully God in his mercy reaches out to them and offers them restoration. God's mercy is extended to such, even such.

As we've seen in those cases, the Lord restored. The danger of backsliding is common to us all. It goes on to say, There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man.

But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above, that you are able, but will with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bury.

No temptation has taken you, but such as is common to man. It's common to man. It's a common fact that all of us are tempted.

[4 : 29] But God is faithful, who will not suffer you. He will not let you be tempted above that, that you are able. But will with the temptation make a way of escape, that you may be able to bury.

There will always be an exit door. Hopefully the exit light sign is working. But there will be an exit sign. There will be an exit door. A way of escape, when temptation comes your way, that you can escape it.

So we've seen a definition of backsliding. Now, secondly, a danger. The danger of backsliding. It's a dangerous place to be in a backslidden state.

A backslider is in a state of man's sensiveness. He that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall. Pride goes before a fall, doesn't it? Self. Oh, I can't fail. I can't slip and slide. Yet, it's common to man. We all have to take attention to the risk, the reality that we're all faced with the danger of backsliding.

[5 : 37] It's not about everyone else. It's examine your own heart, isn't it? As the word tells us. Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith.

Consider the danger of backsliding. Where does it start? It starts in the heart. Proverbs 14, 14, The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.

Me, me, me, me, myself and I. The ego. He shall be filled with his own ways. And a good man shall be satisfied from himself. The backslider in heart.

It starts with the heart of man. In the heart of man. We must guard our hearts. As the scriptures tell us, Keep thy heart with all diligence. Proverbs 4, 23.

Keep thy heart. Guard your heart with all diligence. For out of it are the issues of life. Now, long before anyone openly backslides, There's an inward lapse.

[6 : 38] And the reality is, It can happen very subtly, Such as we are scarcely aware of it. It's the like to the story of the frog in the kettle. You know, that just imperceptibly, Bit by bit, We slip.

It's a danger. The Bible warns us of this danger. It says, Keep your heart. Guard your heart. That inward relapse begins in the heart of man.

A preacher wrote the following illustration, And I can relate to that. And I'm sure some of my country cousins here tonight Can likewise relate to this picture of backsliding.

And this man is a farmer. And he lives in a small rural community. And he tells this picture to illustrate what backsliding is like. And he likens it to this. He says, I'll quote, There are lots of cattle ranches around here.

And every once in a while, A cow wanders off and gets lost. Ask a rancher how a cow gets lost.

[7 : 49] And chances are he will reply, Well, the cow starts nibbling on a tuft of green grass. And when it finishes, It looks ahead to the next tuft of green grass.

And starts nibbling on that one. And then it nibbles on a tuft of green grass Right next to a hole in the fence. And then it sees another tuft of grass On the other side of the fence.

And so it nibbles on that one. And then goes on to the next tuft. And the next thing you know, The cow has nibbled itself into being lost. Isn't that true?

Julie and I can relate to that. Before we got our fences fixed, And our sheep started to wander. All we like sheep have gone astray. Haven't we? And we like a backslider.

Going, Oh, That green grass looks just, On the other side of the fence, Just looks greener, Doesn't it? It's like that with our lives, Isn't it? Sometimes temptation is like the grass On the other side of the fence, As it were.

[8 : 52] And it takes us off in that direction That we get lost, As it were. And this quote goes on, Most people don't deliberately set out To backslide, But following their appetites or desires From one tuft to the next, They nibble themselves through the fence And off the straight and narrow path.

Backsliding. What a picture of it. Of that picture of backsliding. The danger of it. It's just so dangerous, As we like sheep, Can all be going astray.

And to be a backslider Is to be out of sorts with God. It's a deep sin. And it brings a chastening. Who's seen those situations Where someone gets Off the tracks, Spiritually, And God brings a chastening to them.

God's heavy hand is upon them. So that he will draw them back To his path. His rod and his staff. There's a sense where God will bring a directing And a redirecting.

If you don't get things sorted, You face, At the judgment seat of Christ, A time where it says You will suffer loss. So it is dangerous, Isn't it?

[10 : 17] Brother, Sister, It's dangerous to backslide. We don't want to suffer loss At the judgment seat of Christ. Of course we know Our salvation is secure.

In Christ we're saved, Assuredly, Eternally saved. Yet at the judgment seat of Christ, At the time of rewards And crowns, We can suffer loss Such that our lives, As we offer them to God, It's just wood, Hay and stubble.

Just a burnt offering. Just a pile of ashes Of the life we've lived. It's vain. And so there's a danger To backsliding. Then we see, Thirdly, A cause.

What is the cause? How does backsliding happen? How can we be alert to this? This danger That presents for us, How can we have our eyes wide open To be guarding ourselves From such a dangerous sin?

So I put to you some examples Of the causes. And there's many more we could cite, I'm sure, But some to reflect on here.

[11 : 27] Someone has said in Exodus 32, One of the causes here Was the absence of spiritual leaders. Now I'm glad, Just because I wasn't here For a few weeks, You're still all here And you haven't done What these people did.

But as it were, There's a sense where There's an absence Of spiritual leadership Or maybe spiritual accountability That we don't have God's covering over us As it were, As we see reflected here In Exodus 32.

And the occasion was, Of course, At the mount, Moses had gone And received the tablets of stone, The commandments from the Lord. And when the people saw That Moses delayed to come down Out of the mount, The people gathered themselves Together unto Aaron And said unto him, Up, Make us gods!

It goes on, Which shall go before us For as for this Moses, This man, That brought us up Out of the land of Egypt, We want not, We know not What has become of him. Moses is gone, Aaron, Make us some gods.

Backsliding, The people backslid. Moses was out of the picture. You know, The cats away, The mice will play. There was this lack of accountability. There was no authority over them.

[12 : 53] As we see, In some quarters we see people who, There's no established church or order. In some cases, People just are spiritual butterflies.

There's no accountability. They don't belong. And there's no church that they're embedded in. And no accountability over them.

And so, They're at risk of this danger of backsliding. Because there's an absence of spiritual leadership. Another example we could see is in 1 Kings 11.4. This is of Solomon, Another backslider, A man who backslid.

And it reads in 1 Kings 11.4, 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.

Of course, Solomon had multiple wives and concubines. And he chose wives from amongst the heathen, Pagan nations. And it says that his wives turned away his heart after other gods.

[14 : 11] Make sure your life mate is in the same mind as you, In spiritual accord with you, In a follower of Christ.

Don't make that mistake of finding a wife, A husband, That follows not the saviour. Solomon was, In a state of backsliding, Because his wives turned away his heart, After other gods.

Evil associations, Is a cause of backsliding. Who do we associate with? Who do we accompany? Who do we engage with?

And that's not to say, Of course, We all work and relate in circles with people who do not know the Lord. But it's about who you spend your time with. Who is it that you invest your life with?

Evil associations can be a cause of backsliding. And we need to be guarded about that. As it says elsewhere, That evil associations corrupt good manners. Another example might be, Worldly success can be a cause.

[15 : 24] We can get diverted from God's mission, From God's work for us. We can be misdirected. Our heart can be turned away, In lots of ways.

Another cause for backsliding can be shallowness. As the Lord tells of the sower that went out to sow, And comparing the seed that he sowed, As being the representative of the gospel message, And of the ground that received it, As the condition of the hearers of that message communicated. And it tells us in Luke 8.13, As the sower went out to sow, And it says that some rock, Some fell on rock, The seed fell on rock. And the interpretation is given here in Luke 8.13, They on the rock, Are they which hear, Receive the word with joy, And these have no roots, Which for a while believe, And in time of temptation, Fall away.

Another cause of backsliding, Is shallowness. Shallowness. Let's not be a superficial Christian. Let's endeavour to have ourselves planted, And growing, And nurturing our spiritual walk, As we're grounded, Firmly planted, As it were, As the Psalm 1 picture, Of the blessed one. Shallowness can be a cause of backsliding. Another cause can be love for this world. Paul writes of Demas, In 2 Timothy 4 verse 10, He says, For Demas hath forsaken me, Having loved this present world, And has departed.

[17:04] Demas left Paul in the lurch. He says, Demas, Has departed. Now, Paul and Demas were labourers together. It tells us, They were labourers together with God.

They were, Arm in arm, In the gospel cause, Fellow workers, Ministers, Working together. And yet, Paul says, Sadly, Demas hath forsaken me, Having loved this present world. They were once labourers together with God, Then, Something snapped. And Demas deserted Paul. He just shot through. Why? A love for this world. Brother, Sister, Let's not have a love for this world.

Love not the world. The Bible's clear that, This world is, Going to pass away. And, We ought not to get too attached to it, And the things of the world.

[18:05] But rather be attached to, The things of God. So we see many causes here, Of the, The sin of backsliding. Let's move on to the effect of backsliding.

The effect of backsliding. What happens when someone backslides? Backsliding is destructive, To your spiritual life. It's destructive. It brings a hardening to the gospel.

People become indifferent. In other words, They couldn't care. They get, Kind of care, Complacent. They couldn't care less. They get indifferent.

Hardened to the truth. Such that it doesn't, Impact them like it used to. God doesn't move them like he used to.

There's a hardening, Of the heart. And the outward signs can be, For example, A lack of prayer. Of Bible reading.

[19:06] Someone has said, Well, Backsliding begins, When knee bending stops. The effect of backsliding, Kind of goes hand in hand. A lack of prayer, Leads to backsliding, Which leads to a lack of prayer.

And such. Or giving up, Attending fellowship, When there's opportunity. A losing love, For the Lord's work. An enthusiasm, For soul winning.

For, Your spiritual walk with God. There's a hardening that happens. That's one of the effects. And backsliders are like, The lukewarm Laodiceans.

And the lukewarm Laodiceans, We see of them, That they were quite bragging on, About their church. Maybe it was one of the, Mega churches of the day.

As it were. Everything was kind of, Laodiceans. Laodiceans laid on. They needed to sit on, Uncomfortable plastic chairs, Like you guys. They had, You know, I'm just trying to picture, What it would be like. You know, The very plush, Accommodation.

[20:09] And, You know, The temperature would be just set, So, And there'd be no technical issues. And, Everything was just laid on, And the finery, The, The decor, The decorations.

This was a church that had everything down pat. And, Of this church, Our Lord says, In Revelation 3, Because thou sayest, I am rich, And increased with goods, And have need of nothing, And knowest not that thou art wretched, And miserable, And poor, And blind, And naked.

They were bragging on, I am rich, I am increased with goods, I have need of nothing. But yet, God saw what they were really like. He saw truly, That they suffered a spiritual poverty, A spiritual blindness, And a spiritual nakedness.

Now this pictures for us how, I put to you, That you can be a backslider, And not even realise it. Like the Laodiceans.

Isn't that so? You can be a backslider, And not even realise that you won. They were, Backsliders. They had become lukewarm, And they didn't even realise it.

[21:21] They didn't even know it. And saints of God, Backsliding, Is, Something that kind of creeps up on us. And it grieves the very spirit of God.

Doesn't it? It grieves the God's, Holy Spirit. The backslider, Some of the, And result of, Backsliding, Is that the backslider, Loses joy.

Even general joy, But particularly the joy of the Lord. The backslider loses that. The joy of my salvation. David said, Restore it unto me. I've lost it.

Restore it Lord. That joy of my salvation. A backslider loses joy. A backslider loses victory. Such that they're feeling, Like they just can't. Make it.

But it's not in our strength. It's in his, Isn't it? It's not our doing, But his grace. It's his abundant mercy, That helps us get through, The backslider.

[22 : 22] Becomes lukewarm. Half-hearted Christians, Drop out of fellowship. What a tragic thing. And I see so much of that. And I, My heart grieves, When I see that.

It's all too common. You know, I try to be, As careful as I can, To keep record, Of, Who attends the church, And, Of, Of the folk that have, Even, Partly attended, Such that we want to make sure, We take every, Effort, We take pains, To make sure, That no one feels like, They didn't care.

And that's why, It's important for us, When we have visitors, Who we don't know, Who they are, That we make sure, We try to record that, We try to encourage that, And, And brothers and sisters, I'm telling you, Honestly here, That it's important, When there's a newcomer, Amongst us, That we, Take, That particular attention, I know there was, A couple this morning, I had a chat, Before the service, But I didn't catch them, At the end, Often times, Newcomers can, Sit near the back, And then shoot through, You don't get a chance, To say a word, And, They can get an impression, Oh it was cold, People were cold, Towards me, Nobody spoke to me, No one cared, No one, Smiled or welcomed me, And that's really important, For us, Because it's, I mean it's just human relations, Isn't it?

The world can do that, Worldly organisations, Know such things, You know, Go to a, A place, An eating place, Some, Worldly setting, And, And, The warmth that you receive, Is one of those things, That will draw you back, Or the lack of it, Will, Draw you away, And we need to always, Be mindful of that, There's many half-hearted Christians, And I see, You know, As I say, I've got, I've got lists, Of people, You know, Imagine this church, Has been going nearly 20 years, There's a lot of people, That have come and gone, And yeah, Hundreds, Of people, We still try, And usually, I try until I say, Oh, Don't bother me anymore, Click, Because you get to that point, Don't you?

Like, We don't want to, Ever, People ever to think, That we haven't cared, Because that's important, Because we represent the Lord, And this might be the only opportunity, Some people get, To have a fellowship, With like-minded believers, Who love the Lord, And his truth, And so we want to take special effort, To that, So half-hearted Christians, Will drop out of fellowship, Unto the church at Ephesus, The Lord said in Revelation 2, Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, Because thou hast left, Thy first love, It's evident through the scriptures, That God, Always forms his people, Into a community, It's always the biblical pattern, Isn't it?

[25 : 24] Right through the scriptures, The children of Israel, They were a unity, They were a united, Cohesive community, And likewise, There's the church in Acts, In Acts 2, In Acts 4, They were together, They were in one accord, There was a knitting together, In love, That the church is, The biblical pattern, It's always been the case, And how important it is, That we unite together, And gather, As God's people, It's so precious, It's a foretaste of heaven, In a way, We're still practicing the songs, So that we'll sound, Like the angels one day, But we know that we're still, On the journey, We haven't arrived yet, But we're meant to be, A foretaste of heaven, A colony of heaven, On earth, And so it's important, That we unite together, Yet the backslider, Thinks nothing of that, That, There's not that first love there, There's not that passion, That they once might have known, As a new believer, That,

The backslider, Can become hard hearted, And it's a gradual decline, A gradual drift, They can lose interest, Interest in souls being saved, Well that's, That's just the, Absolute max, The absolute tops, Isn't it?

To see someone, Trust the Lord, And be saved, That should be, What drives, Our whole mind, And thinking, Our relationships, With people, To see souls saved, By the backslider, Thinks little of such things, They lack an interest, In the word of God, And I've, I made a confession, This morning, That my back, My Bible reading, Practice has not been very good, I've not been very disciplined, And it's a, I'm a pastor, For goodness sake, I should, Be an example to you people, But I have failed, I've been a bit, Piecemeal with my Bible reading, And I've seen a Bible reading plan, Now that I'm trying to, Follow, And thus far I have, Since January the 1st, So, Now I can read through the Bible, Three times a year, There's Bible reading plans, I've done it, I've already read through the Bible, Numbers of times already, But it's about having that discipline, Isn't it?

We can get, We can get, Tardy, We can get, Careless, Complacent, Such that we miss that, And our Bible reading is a bit, Oh a bit, Haphazard, Let's, Refresh that love, That first love, Let's get

back to the Bible, As best as we can, And renew that, Refresh that interest, In the word of God, For the backslider, There's a coldness, That takes over, An indifference, To the word of God, There's a lukewarmness, About prayer, A carelessness, Overtakes, And friends, The backslider, Knows not, The spirit of sacrifice, Is a spiralling away, A drawing back, A looking back, Like Lot's wife, Carelessness, For the backslider, The world has a strong draw on them, Such that they're drawn away, And they show more interest, At times to idle chit chat, Or Facebook, Whatever it be, We can all be guilty, Confess, Confession time again, That we can get, Drawn aside by, The distractions, Can't we? Such that, It takes us away, From what matters, And we lose that sense, Of the power of the gospel, Our senses can be dull, Into the, The sinfulness of sin, And we can be just like, Our worldly neighbours, Who know not the Lord, In that way of living, Of talking, Of acting, We lose that sense, Of diligence, We're swayed, By the worldly, Talk and thinking, Hosea 11, 7 it says, And my people are bent, To backsliding from me, Though they called them, To the most high, None at all, Would exalt him, Notice the Lord here, In Hosea 11, 7, He's talking to, My people, He says they are bent, To backsliding, They're prone to it, They're inclined to it, Now what does that song say?

[29 : 39] Prone to wonder, Lord I feel it, Prone to leave, The God I love, We're prone to it, It's an inclination, To go the wrong way, We've got to be disciplined, What a reproach, To be bent to backsliding, Lot chose the plains of Sodom, And Gomorrah, Against the will of God, The world's vain ways, Trew him aside, The backslider ends up, Living by the flesh, Instead of by the spirit, In Titus 1, 16, It tells how, The backslider is inconsistent, They, They profess, You know, Blab, Blab, Blab, They know God, But in works, They deny him, Their life doesn't measure up, With their profession, Their service is vain and empty, A mere lip service, As Matthew 15, Our Lord tells of the people, They draw nigh to me, With their mouth, They honour me with their lips, But their heart, Is far from me,

When our lips don't line up, With our life, There's a problem there, It's backsliding, For the backslider, When he fails to lean on the Lord, And his strength, His life becomes fruitless, John 15, 5, It says, I am the vine, Ye are the branches, He that abideth in me, And I in him, The same bringeth forth much fruit, For without me, You can do nothing, How sad it would be, Brother, Sister, For you to be unfruitful, When God wants you to abound, In that fruit, Fruit that lasts, Fruit that remains, To bear no fruit for God, It's telling, Really, You could picture of, The fruit of the spirit, For example, You could reflect, It could intend that, Or likewise, That we should bear fruit, We should, We should, Make disciples, And a religion that is not fruitful, Is a mere form, A spiritual deadness, A sleepiness creeps in,

Woe to the backslider, Without me you can do nothing, We must hold on to him, And be in him, And him in us, And so he can bear fruit, From our lives, Woe to the backslider, The Lord was angry with Solomon, Because his heart was turned away, From the Lord God of Israel, Woe to you, If you provoke the anger of God, It's a very dangerous place to be, Isn't it?

And Peter tells us such, That they've escaped the pollution of the world, Through the knowledge of the Lord, And saved the Jesus Christ, They're again entangled therein, What a picture to be, Entangled therein, In the pollutions of the world, God's taken us out of that, Yet some are drawn back to it, They just, They haven't broken those ties, Those, That pull, Is drawing them back, The pollutions of the world, May we not take for granted, Our standing with God, A preacher called Oswald Sanders said, We must not just take it for granted, That we are in touch with God, Joseph and Mary, Lost a whole day, Of fellowship with Jesus, Because they, Supposed him to be, In the company, They thought he was in the crowd, They supposed him to be in the company, But Mary and Joseph, Had lost Jesus, They'd lost his presence, They took it for granted, Something that they should have made sure of,

A light to that we read of Samson, He was out of touch with God, And he did not know it, In Judges 16 verse 20, Samson, Delilah had cut his hair, And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson, And he woke out of his sleep, And he said, I will go out, As at other times before, And shake myself, And he wished not, That the Lord was departed from him, He didn't know the Lord had departed from him, Here he was, Lying in the lap of Delilah, His hair was a symbol of God's, Consecration in his life, And he thought he could shake himself, And be the macho man again, The man of faith and power, But the Lord, Had departed from him, Friends, We've seen these dreadful pictures of backsliding, But thankfully there is an encouragement for us to leave you with now, The solution for backsliding, Restoration,

[34 : 15] It's possible, That's the great grand plan of God, Isn't it? That when we see someone, Who is out of accord with God, We can restore such a one, We can restore, Restoration is possible, It's God's grand plan, That all will be restored, And receive that, That reception, Thankfully there is hope for the backslider, The backslider can be restored, If you're feeling like, Well preacher, I'm feeling a bit like I'm a backslider tonight, Well there's grace, Amen, Praise God, There's grace, Stop running from God, Yet there is hope in his mercy, He will abundantly pardon, There is a solution, Because God's mercy is extended, Jeremiah 3, It tells us, Verse 12, Go and proclaim these words, Towards the north and say,

Return thou backsliding Israel, Saith the Lord, And I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, For I am merciful, Saith the Lord, And I will not keep anger forever, While we might, At times, Rightfully, Face the anger of God, He says, Return, Return to me, And I will not keep my anger forever, He says, I am merciful, The solution for backsliding, Is the mercy of God, Isn't it?

Don't you love the story, Of the prodigal, The son, The lost son, And, The welcome home, That he received, When he, Came to his senses, And he realised, The foul state, He was in, Even the place he was in, But, More internally, The state that he was in, He came to his senses, And he said, I am going to go back, To my father's house, And the Lord will welcome us back, As the father welcomed his son, Come back to the father's house, Come back to the father's house, There we can regain, That presence, That fellowship of our Lord, And people can get right with God, And be restored, It's God's pattern, As we see King David, He went through severe backsliding, But he's ultimately restored, He was restored, After repenting, King Saul, On the other hand, He never did get right with God, After his backslidings,

Can we, Be like David, Not like Saul, Such that we will, Cry out, The Psalm 51, That cry from the depths of his heart, Broken in spirit, Yet, Received by God, His heart, Was made right, Colossians 3, It tells us, If you then be risen with Christ, Seek those things, Which are above, Where Christ sitteth, On the right hand, Of God, Set your affection, On things above, Not on things, On the earth, Can we reset, Our affection, If it be, The case that, Our affection, Has been too earthbound, Can we reset, Our affection, Today, Make that stand for him, The Lord can affect, A soul deep healing, For the backslider, He promises healing, He says, Hosea 14, For I will heal, Their backsliding, I will love them freely,

For mine anger, Is turned away, From him, So, The truth is, That God heals, The backslider, There's a wonderful, Restoration, His tender, Touch, Will bring, A healing, Deep down, In your heart, And that dread, Spiritual sickness, Of the soul, That is backsliding, Can be healed, Let us come before him, And seek after God, Seek, Seek a refreshing, A resetting, A restoration, Of your spiritual walk, With him, Make today, That day, Of change, God helping you, To choose, His way, God calls us, To repent, To seek after God, Earnestly, We can make, That spiritual reset, Press that reset button, As it were, Spiritually, We can know, A day by day victory, Over the carnal man, By, Judging ourselves, Not others, Judge yourself,

[38 : 56] That's probably, The hardest, Thing to do, Isn't it? Like I said before, The man I have the most, Trouble with in this church, Is the one, That looks to me, In the mirror, In the morning, And Julie probably, Has the same trouble, With him too, But, We have that, That carnal nature, The carnal man, That we've got to, Judge ourselves, First, Don't we?

I thought Julie, Would say amen to that, We've got to, Confess our sins, We've got to get right, With God, And have that, Daily cleansing, If we confess our sins, He's faithful and just, To forgive us our sins, To cleanse us, From all unrighteousness, We can receive, His forgiveness, His peace, His blessing, His victory, And you can return, To where you were, With God, That's good news, Isn't it? I know for myself, I've had some, Meanderings, And it's a little bite, You know, You have your ups and downs, In your spiritual walk, And your journey with him, That sometimes we have, Those low points, We can return, To where we once were, In Jeremiah 3, The Lord says, Return, You backsliding children, And I will heal, Your backslidings, Behold, We come unto thee, For thou art, The Lord our God, You can get back to God, You can get back, That passion, Who can remember, The day you were saved, Wow, Glory, Who can remember, That moment, Of time, That first love, You can, Return, You can restore, You can, See God revive, His working, In your heart, A great recovery, Is possible, And brother, Sister, If you're a backslider, There's hope, There's peace, There's restoration, For you, And it tells us,

How we can be taken, Out of the pit, And place our feet, On the solid rock, He brought me up, Also out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet, Upon a rock, And established my goings,

He can return us, Return us there, To that spiritual life, And power, So that whatever, Might have happened to us, Since we were saved, As much as we might have been, Through some storms, And troubles, And hurts, We can return, We can be restored, We can refresh, We can set the reset button, On our spiritual life and walk, And know a refreshing, A renewing of our conviction, Of our concern, Of our holy fear, Of that walk with God, As we start with a self-examination, And examine yourselves, Whether you be in the faith, Let go of hypocrisy, And putting on masks, And be honest with him, And he can strengthen us, Like he did Joseph, Joseph, He held his ground, As he was facing great temptation, Joseph faced that temptation, With the right decision, To flee, Joseph said to Potiphar's wife, How can I do such great, This great wickedness, How can I sin against God, She was tempting him, To evil, He says, How can I do this great wickedness, And sin against God, It's getting your focus right, Isn't it, That what matters is, What does God want, And our Lord can refresh, That personal walk with him, That love for his truth, The fear of God, Such that, And it's not a fear, A trepidation, Of, Of, As if you, Um, In some trembling, Of failing him, But, That you want to please him, You want to honour him, And exalt him, And give him the due glory,

[42 : 47] And praise, And the blessing, And to be that living sacrifice, Of your life, For his glory, And praise, Such that, You esteem, And exalt him, To such a point, That, He is all accounts, In Revelation 2, It tells us of, The church at Ephesus, And our Lord says, Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, Thou hast left thy first love, Remember therefore, From whence thou art fallen, And repent, Remember where you were, And repent, Switch things around, Make that turning point, That you turn, That turning around, Repent, And do the first works, Or else I will come unto thee quickly, I will remove thy candlestick, Out of thy place, His place, Except thou repent, So, The church was rebuked here, As they left their first love, And the Lord says, Remember where you've fallen from,

And repent, Now there's many that, Might have religion, Yet not, Salvation, I've been preaching tonight, Really to Christians here, Because backsliders are, Christians, That have slipped, And have become careless, And, Really it starts, As you put your trust in Christ, At that, Point of receiving his gift, That's when salvation begins, At that receiving of his gift, Of eternal life, As you place your trust in Christ, Dying on the cross, For your sin, It's contrary to every other kind of religion, I know that there's some, That I've had words with before, I've had exposure to the Mormon religion, For example, And, All of the, The contrary kind of religions, It's all about, Do, Do, Do, I must do good, Do good works, Do this, Do that, Give that,

Give this, Sacrifice, Push myself, Attend every meeting, Do, Do, Do, Do, Do, But in Christianity, It's done, It is finished, It's done, He cried out, It is finished, It's done, The work is done, The finished work of the cross is done, I have done everything, He says, To save you, Simply trust me, And, Likewise, The son, Trying, Trying, Trying, Trying to climb some ladder of good works, As if, But the ladder's just not, Tall enough, You can't climb some ladder of good works, It's just going to fall over, It's never going to reach heaven, No, No trying of your own can save you, It's not trying, It's trusting, It's trusting in his work, It's trusting in the blood of Jesus to save your soul, And friends, That's the salvation, That's when it begins, What I'm talking tonight is how sometimes our passion can wane, And our first love can grow, Less, We can become careless Christians, And I urge you tonight, That, Let's not make that mistake, Let's rather refresh our spiritual walk, Such that we agonise before God, And we take this seriously, Because this is heaven and hell, It's eternity, We remember the sacred throne of grace, And we don't hold back from going there, It's open, The helpline, Is open, Isn't it?

24 by 7, By, Every day, And, You can go to the throne of grace, And find grace, You can find help, In time of need, Let's give up, Lifeless religion, And find, That communion with God, That comes from knowing him, And he says, I will heal, Hosea 14, And Psalm 41, To close, The psalmist cried, I said, Lord, Be merciful unto me, Heal my soul, For I have sinned against thee, Here's a good prayer, For the backslider to pray, And look, I can pray it myself, Because I've had times, Of backsliding, I said, Lord, Be merciful unto me, Heal my soul, For I have sinned against thee, He brings a healing, Deep down, To your soul, To your heart, There is a balm in Gilead, There is an outpouring, Of his grace, That extends still, And we can have the faith,

[47 : 31] That says, Speak but a word, And thy servant, Shall be healed, You don't need some, Glamorous, Spectacular, Signs and wonders, Or some, Preacher to lay hands on you, Or prophesy over you, As in some, Quarters they would, But, We just need to hear, The word of God, He says,

Speak a word, And your servant, Will be healed, Now this, The word of God, Is, He will heal the backsliding, He'll heal the backslidden, Return, Return unto him, Let's pray, Lord, We thank you, That your grace, Is sufficient, Still, It's grace, That it's amazing, Grace that is abounding, Even to the, Chiefest of sinners, Lord, That you can have grace, And you sow grace, At the throne of grace, Grace to help, In time of need, Lord, We pray, Bless each one, Each heart here, Help us, Lord, To each one, Be honest with you, As to our state today,

That you would do a work, A deep work, By your spirit's power, Draw us closer, Ever closer to you, Lord, We pray, Heal my soul, For I have sinned, Against thee, Lord, Heal our backsliding, Let us be a church, That holds nothing back, But we'll be, All out, Until, You take us to yourself, Lord, Let us not make the mistake, Of being a church, That says, I'm rich, And I have need of nothing, Because we, Absolutely have need of you, We have need, Of your mercy and grace, We have need of your truth, We have need of your spirit's, Working and unction, Lord, Refresh us again, In our spiritual lives, We pray, Bless each one, Each family, Each heart, Each home, That today may be a turning point, Where we say, Lord, Heal me, I have sinned against thee, Heal my soul, Lord Jesus, We praise you, In Jesus name, Amen.

Amen.