

How To Stop Backsliding

(2 Peter 2:20-22)

- Introduction:
1. All of us have probably known someone who surrendered their lives to Jesus, only to later quit following him.
 2. It's a sad reality that is even worse than having never known the Lord (Luke 12:42-48; 2 Peter 2:20-22).
 3. In this lesson, I would like to offer a solution to the problem of backsliding.
 4. This solution is not the solution that most people offer, but I believe it is a far better solution to this problem.

I. Backsliding: The Reality

- A. (Jeremiah 8:5).
- B. (Hebrews 3:12-13).
- C. (2 Peter 2:20-22).

II. Backsliding: The Reason

- A. Most people suggest that the reason for backsliding is a lack of "follow-up" given to those who have obeyed the gospel.
- B. While I am not suggesting that "follow-up" has no place, I am suggesting that it has much less to do with backsliding as some may think.
- C. I believe the real problem is our preaching prior to one's conversion, not our teaching, or lack thereof, after one's conversion.
- D. We may be guilty of preaching a watered-down gospel that lacks the urgency befitting of the gospel and emphasizes the wrong things.
 1. The gospel is not about "life-enhancement," "happiness," "fulfillment."
 2. Ills. Two men on an airplane.
 - a. One is given a parachute and is told to put it on because it will enhance his flight.
 1. So he puts it on experimentally.
 2. Soon, however, it becomes uncomfortable and people begin to make fun of him - so he takes it off.
 - b. The other is given a parachute and is told the plane is crashing and that he will have to use it if he hopes to survive.
 1. This man puts it on for survival. No amount of ridicule or inconvenience could ever convince him to remove it.
- E. This identifies the problem with preaching today.
 1. We're not preaching a desperate, urgent gospel.
 2. We're giving people the wrong reasons to obey, that will not sustain trial.
 - a. A "Health & Wealth Gospel" is popular today.
 - b. We may not be convicting people of their sinfulness.
 - c. We may not be explaining the nature of God.

III. Backsliding: The Remedy

- A. Preach the word (2 Timothy 4:1-4).
- B. Make them see the desperate condition in which they find themselves.
- C. (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

- Conclusion:
1. When one is taught what is at stake and convicted of their inevitable fate unless they turn to Jesus, they won't soon backslide, regardless of whether someone follows-up with them or not.
 2. On the contrary, if you want to see more and more backsliders, convince them Christianity is simply about being a better person, having a happier life, and a better journey - then when they see that isn't so, they will jettison their faith because it is useless or cumbersome.
 3. The cure for backsliding isn't something that is taught after conversion, but before it.