



“THE GREAT FALLING AWAY”



WEEKLY CHRISTIAN FOCUS

Warm Greetings in Jesus!

I venture to say that probably all Christians have fallen away from the Lord at some time or another in their lives. In this issue I am pasting in a very wonderful Bible study about what is referred to as ‘Backsliding’. This is done in the King James version. (KJV) I pray you will enjoy it and find it very fascinating.

I should say though that although we ‘backslide’ or fall away from Loving God as we should, or even from His Work in general and His calling on us, I have found the verse in the Bible is true that God keeps us from totally falling away completely, as Peter says in 1 Peter 1:3-5

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, **5 who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.**

It is GOD who keeps us ultimately. He chose us before the foundation of the world and has a job of ‘good works’ or ministry to accomplish. John 15:16 and so many others if you search the words chose, or chosen.

So I am sure this study will be greatly encouraging for us all.

We need to know also that Backsliding will always have unpleasant consequences which we could avoid, simply by asking God for His mercy and help and His keeping power. It is **all** by grace, both our salvation which is free through Jesus Christ and the ability to keep going for Him on this earth.

With much love and prayers
Jerry and the WCF Team

BACKSLIDING (Falling away from the Lord and His will)

1. Spiritual problems that lead to backsliding:

A. Cooling off & losing "first love" for Jesus:

Rev.2:4-5 Thou hast left thy first love...remember from whence thou art fallen, & repent...or else I will remove

Rev.3:15,16 Thou art lukewarm, & neither cold nor hot
B. Being filled with own ways & desires:

Pro.14:14 Backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways

Ezk.14:3,5 These men have set up their idols in their heart...they are estranged from Me through their idols

Ezk.14:7-8 Every one

which...setteth up his idols in his heart ...I will cut him off from the midst of My people

1Tim.6:9 Hurtful
lusts...drown men in perdition

C. Losing sight of the Heavenly goal in favour of temporal gain:

Pro.29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish

Mal.3:14 Ye said, It is vain to serve God...what profit is it?

Lk.15:12,13 Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. He (left) & wasted his substance with riotous living

Heb.12:16-17 Esau, for one morsel of meat sold his birthright

2Pet.1:9 He...cannot see afar off, & hath for gotten that he was purged from his old sins

D. Quitting when the going gets tough:

Mat.13:20,21 When persecution ariseth...by & by he is offended

Jn.10:12,13 An hireling...seeth the wolf coming, & leaveth the sheep, & fleeth. He careth not for the sheep

E. Desiring worldly pleasures & riches:

Heb.11:14-15 If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have...returned

Gen.19:26 (Lot's) wife looked back...& became a pillar of salt

Num.11:5,6 [Lusting for things of Egypt] (See also Exo.16:3)

Psa.73:2,3 My steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at ...the prosperity of the wicked

Mat.13:22 The care of

this world, & the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word

2Tim.4:10 Demas hath forsaken me, having loved present world

1Jn.2:15-17 If any man love the world, love of the Father not in him

Rev.3:17 I am rich & increased with goods & have need of nothing

(See also 1Cor.10:5,6)

F. Not grounded in or obeying the Word:

Lk.8:13 These have no root... in time of temptation fall away

Mat.7:26-27 [He] that heareth these sayings...& doeth them not... house upon the sand...great was the fall of it

1Tim.1:19 Faith... which some having put away made shipwreck

2Tim.4:3,4 They shall turn away their ears from the truth

G. Having a doubting, questioning, unbelieving attitude:

Jn.6:60,66 Many disciples said, this is an hard saying; who can hear it? Many went back, & walked no more with Him

Rom.11:20 Because of unbelief they were broken off

Col.2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy

Heb.3:12 Take heed, lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God

Jude 5 The Lord, having saved the people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not

H. Hardening heart to the truth:

Mat.13:15 Ears dull of hearing...their eyes they have closed

Eph.4:18-19 Having understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through blindness...past feeling

I. Doublemindedness & wavering:

2Chr.25:2,14 He did that which was right, but not with a perfect heart [& soon worshipped other gods] (See Psa.78:36,37)

Psa.78:8,9 (They) set not their heart aright...spirit was not steadfast with God...turned back in the day of battle

Hos.10:2 Their heart is divided; now (are) they found faulty

Jam.1:6-8 A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways (See also Eph.4:14)

J. Refusing to receive correction:

Pro.14:9 Fools make a mock at sin [as if it's not serious]

Pro.15:10 Correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way

Job 33:9,10 I am clean...I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me [vs.10--"He just has it in for me."]

K. Not confessing problems & sins:

Pro.28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper

Jn.3:19b-20 Neither cometh to light, lest his deeds be reproved

(See Isa.29:15 & Saul's problem in 1Sam.15:1-35.)

L. Not responding to God's loving chastisement:

Pro.29:1 He that being often reproved, & hardeneth his neck

Isa.1:5 Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye revolt more

Isa.57:17 I was wroth, & smote him [but] he went on frowardly in the way of his heart

Jer.2:30a In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction

(See also Isa.42:25; Jer.5:3; Dan.9:13.)

M. Allowing bitterness to grow:

Heb.12:15 Lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you

(See also Jam.3:14,15; Eph.4:31.)

N. Being led astray with vain imaginations:

Jer.7:24 They walked in the imagination of their evil heart, & went backward (See also Jer.13:10; 16:12.)

O. Idleness & gossiping:

1Tim.5:12,13 They have cast off their faith. They learn to be idle, wandering...tattlers & busybodies

2Tim.2:16 Vain babblings...will increase unto more

ungodliness (See also Eph.1:14; 1Tim.6:20,21.)

P. Murmuring & ingratitude:

Num.14:27-30 [Murmurers not allowed to enter the promised land]

(See also Num.11:1; 21:5,6; 1Cor.10:10; Jude 15,16a.)

Q. Fellowship with trouble-makers:

Pro.6:12-16,19 Frowardness is in his heart...he soweth discord

Pro.13:20 A companion of fools shall be destroyed

1Cor.15:33 Evil communications corrupt good manners

Gal.5:7 Who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

(See also Lk.6:45; 1Ki.11:4.)

R. Desiring fellowship with the world:

Jam.4:4 Whoever will be a friend of the world is enemy of God

S. A lack of fear of the Lord:

Jer.2:19b Thou hast forsaken the Lord...My fear is not in thee

2. How the Lord views those who turn their backs on

Him:

Pro.26:11 As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth

Jer.2:13 They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters

Jer.2:19 Know...that it is an evil thing & bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God

Lk.9:62 No man...looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God

Heb.10:38 If any draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in

2Pet.2:22 The dog is turned to his vomit & the sow to wallowing

3. The danger of fellowship with those who have turned away from the Lord:

A. They can corrupt & undermine others:

Deut.20:8 Let him return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart

Judg.7:3 Whoever is

fearful, let him return & depart early
Acts 29:28-30 Of your
own selves shall men arise, speaking
perverse things, to draw away
disciples after them

1Cor.5:6,7 A little
leaven leaveneth the whole lump.
Purge out therefore the old leaven
(See also 2Pet.2:18,19)

**B. They cannot be trusted or
depended upon:**

Psa.78:57 They turned
aside like a deceitful bow
Pro.25:19 Confidence
in an unfaithful man in time of
trouble is like a broken tooth & a foot
out of joint
(See also Pro.23:7;
Gal.2:4,5.)

**4. God's punishment of those who
forsake Him:**

Deut.28:63 The Lord
will rejoice...to bring you to nought
Josh.24:20 If ye forsake
the Lord...He will do you hurt, &
consume you, after that He hath done
you good

Ezra 8:22b His power
& wrath is against them that forsake
Him

Jer.15:6 Thou art gone
backward: therefore will I destroy
thee

Mat.5:13 If the salt
have lost savour...it is good for
nothing, but to be cast out, & trodden
under foot

Jn.15:6 If a man abide not in
Me, he is cast forth...& is withered;
&...they are burned

Heb.10:26 If we sin
wilfully after we have received the
truth, there remaineth...a fearful
looking for of judgment

2Pet.2:21 Better for
them not to have known the way of
righteousness, than, after they have
known...to turn

(See also Job 34:26,25;
Psa.44:20-21; Pro.28:10; Jer.5:6,19.)

**5. God's promises of mercy to those
who return to**

Him:

2Chr.30:9b God is
gracious & merciful, & will not turn
away His face from you, if ye return
unto Him

Isa.54:7,8 For a small
moment have I forsaken thee; but
with great mercies will I gather thee

Isa.55:7 Let the wicked
forsake his way & return, & He will
have mercy upon him

Jer.3:12 Return, backsliding
Israel...for I am merciful

Jer.3:14 Turn, O backsliding
children, for I am married to you

Jer.3:22 Return...& I will heal
your backslidings

Hos.14:4 I will heal
their backsliding...Mine anger turned
away

Joel 2:12-13 Turn
ye to Me with all your heart, &
with weeping...God is gracious &
merciful, & of great kindness

Zech.10:6b I will have
mercy upon them: & they shall be as
though I had not cast them off

(See also Job 14:7; Isa.1:18;
Ezk.36:26,27; Dan.9:9.)

**6. Attitude for repentant prodigals
to have:**

2Chr.7:14 If My
people...humble themselves & seek
My face, & turn from their wicked
ways...I will forgive

Psa.41:4 Lord...heal
my soul; for I have sinned against
Thee

Psa.51:3 I
acknowledge my transgressions: &
my sin is before

Psa.84:10 I had rather
be a doorkeeper in the house of my
God, than to dwell in the tents of
wickedness

Psa.119:176 I have gone
astray like a lost sheep; seek (me)

Jer.14:7 Our backslidings are
many...have sinned against Thee

Jer.24:7 I will be their God:
for they shall return unto Me with
their whole heart

Ezk.36:31 Then
shall ye remember...& shall loathe
yourselves...for your iniquities

Hos.6:1 Come, let us return
unto the Lord...He will heal us

Lk.15:19,21 I am no
more worthy to be called thy son:
make me as one of thy hired servants
(See also Job 40:1-5; 42:1-6;
Psa.51:all; Dan.9:3-20; Jam.4:6-10.)

7. How to avoid backsliding:

**A. Love the Lord & keep the
Heavenly vision:**

Mat.6:21 Where your
treasure is, there will your heart be
also

Mat.6:24 Hate the
(world), & love the (Lord)...hold to
the (Lord), & despise the (world)

Col.2:6,7 Rooted &
built up in Him, & stablished in the
faith

Col.3:1,2 Set your
affection on things above, not on...
earth

Heb.12:2,3 Looking
unto Jesus...lest ye faint in your
minds

**B. Remember that serving Jesus is
worth it all:**

1Cor.15:58 Be steadfast,
unmoveable...in the work of the
Lord, your labour is not in vain in the
Lord

Gal.6:9 Let us not be weary
in well doing: for in due season we
shall reap, if we faint not

Heb.10:35 Cast not
away your confidence...hath great
recompense

Heb.11:26,27 Esteeming...
Christ greater riches than the
treasures of Egypt...endured, as
seeing Him Who is invisible

Jam.1:12 Blessed is
the man that endureth temptation...he
shall receive the crown of life (See
also 2Tim.4:7,8)

Rev.3:11 Hold fast
which thou hast, that no man take thy
crown

(See Jn.15:2-7 about
"abiding in the vine"; See also
2Cor.4:16-18; Rev.2:26-28.)

**C. Trust the Lord to keep you
faithful:**

Psa.17:5 Hold up my
goings in Thy paths that my (feet)
slip not

Psa.26:1b I have
trusted in the Lord; I shall not slide

Jude 24 He (God) is able to
keep you from falling

D. Hide the Word in your heart:

Psa.119:9 Cleanse his
way by taking heed...to Thy Word

Psa.119:11 Word hid
in mine heart, that I might not sin
against

Psa.37:31 Law of God

is in his heart; none of his steps slide
Psa.119:165 Great peace
have they which love Thy law: &
nothing shall offend them
(See also 2Thes.2:15;
2Pet.1:4.)

E. Forsake daydreaming & vain thoughts:

Psa.119:113 I hate vain
thoughts: but Thy law do I love
2Cor.10:5 Casting
down imaginations, & everything
that exalteth

Phi.4:8 Whatsoever things
are true...honest...think on these

F. Have conviction; know what you believe:

1Ki.18:21 How long
halt ye between two opinions? If the
Lord be God, follow Him

Jn.6:67-68 Jesus (said)
unto the twelve, Will ye also go
away? To whom shall we go? Thou
hast the words of life

Acts 20:24 None of
these things move me...that I might
finish (my) ministry...to testify the
gospel

Rom.14:5b Let every
man be fully persuaded in his own
mind

2Pet.1:10 Make your
calling & election sure...shall never
fall

G. Receive correction & reproof:

Psa.141:5 Let righteous
reprove me...shall be an excellent oil
Pro.6:23 Reproofs of
instruction are the way of life (See
also Pro.10:17)

Pro.27:5,6 Faithful are
the wounds of a friend

Heb.3:13 Exhort one
another daily, lest any of you be
hardened

Heb.12:5-13 Endure
chastening...lest (ye) be turned out of
the way

H. Confess your problems & sins:

Pro.28:13 Whoso
confesseth & forsaketh (sins) shall
have mercy

Heb.12:1 Lay aside
every weight, & the sin...& run the
race

Jam.5:16 Confess your
faults one to another, & pray one for
(See also Job 11:14; 1Jn.1:8-
10.)

I. Withdraw yourself from those who turn away from the truth:

Psa.1:1-2 (Walk) not in
the counsel of the ungodly, nor (sit)

Psa.119:63 I am a
companion of them that fear Thee, &
of them that keep Thy precepts (See
also Pro.13:20)

Rom.16:17,18 Avoid
them...by fair speeches deceive the
simple

Eph.5:11 Have no
fellowship with...but rather reprove
them

2Thes.3:6 Withdraw
selves from brother that walketh
disorderly

1Tim.6:3-5 Perverse
disputings...from such withdraw
thyselves

2Pet.3:17 Beware lest
ye being led away with the wicked,
fall

(See also Exo.23:2a;
Pro.1:10,15.)

J. Love not the world:

Rom.12:2 Be not
conformed to this world, but be ye
transformed

Gal.6:14 Cross of
Christ, (whereby) world is crucified
unto me

2Tim.2:4 No man that
warreth entangleth self with...this
world

1Jn.2:15 Love not the
world, neither the things in the world
(See also Col.3:2;
1Cor.7:31.)

K. Endure hardships:

Psa.44:14-18 All this is
come upon us: yet...our heart is not
turned back, neither have our steps
declined

2Tim.2:3 Endure
hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus
Christ

Heb.11:24,25 Choosing
rather to suffer affliction...than to
enjoy the pleasures of sin for a
season

(See also Heb.12:1-3)

L. Remember how much you've already endured:

Gal.3:4 Have ye suffered so
many things in vain?

Heb.10:32 Call to
remembrance the former days, in
which...ye endured a great fight (See

also Heb.6:11)

M. Give up personal desires, endure temptations:

Lk.9:23-25 Whosoever
will save his life shall lose it

1Cor.9:27 I keep
my body (under), & bring it into
subjection: lest...I myself should be a
castaway

Phi.3:7,8 Suffered the
loss of all things & count them but
dung

(See also Lk.14:33;
1Tim.6:10,11; Jam.1:12; 1Pet.2:11.)

N. Be thankful & content:

Phi.4:11 Have
learned, in whatever state I am...to be
content

1Thes.5:18 In
everything give thanks

1Tim.6:6-8 Having food
& raiment let us be therewith content
(See also Pro.15:16;
Eccl.6:9; Heb.13:5.)

O. Forget your worldly past:

Psa.45:10 Forget thine
own people, & thy father's house
Lk.9:60 Let the dead bury the
dead: but go thou & preach

Phi.3:13,14 Forgetting
things which are behind, I reach
forward

(See also 1Pet.4:2,3)

P. Be thankful for what He's delivered you from:

Psa.40:2 He brought
me out of an horrible pit...& set my
feet upon a rock

Q. Consider what backsliding leads to:

Pro.5:8-13 Lest thou
give thy years unto the cruel...& thou
mourn at the last

Pro.13:15 The way of
the transgressor is hard

Pro.21:16 (He) shall
remain in the congregation of the
dead

Ezk.3:20
Righteousness which he hath done...
not be remembered

Lk.17:32 Remember
Lot's wife [She became a pillar of
salt]

1Cor.3:11-15 If any
build...wood, hay, stubble...he shall
suffer loss

Gal.4:9 How turn ye again...
ye desire again to be in bondage

2Pet.2:20 If after they have escaped the...world...they are again entangled therein, the latter end is worse

(See also Psa.106:15; Ezk.18:24; Gal.6:7,8; Rev.3:11.)

8. The attitude to have towards backsliders:

A. Try to win them back, if possible:

Jer.31:20 Since I spake against him, I remember him still

Lk.15:4-6 What man... having 100 sheep, if he lose one, doth not

Lk.15:20-24 [Father rejoiced & welcomed prodigal son back home]

(See also Gal.6:1,2; 2Tim.2:24-26.)

B. Don't give up on one-time backsliders:

Jer.31:17 There is hope in thine end...that thy children shall come again to their own border

(See the story of Simon Peter in Lk.22:54-62; Mk.16:7; Acts

2:14,38,40.)

(See the story of John Mark in Acts 13:5,13; 14:36-40; 2Tim.4:11.)

C. But forget trying to win chronic backsliders:

Judg.10:13-14 Ye have forsaken Me...I will deliver you no more

1Sam.15:35; 16:1 Samuel mourned for Saul...& the Lord said..."How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him"

Jer.8:5 Slidden back by a perpetual backsliding...they refuse to return

Hos.4:17 Ephraim joined to idols: let him alone (See Mat.15:14)

Heb.6:4-6 Impossible... if they shall fall away, to renew them (See also 1Tim.6:5;

Tit.3:10,11.)

D. Some people were never really part of your fellowship:

Gal.2:4 False brethren

unawares...came in privily to spy out

1Jn.2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued

Jude 4 Men crept in...who were ordained to condemnation

E. Some backsliders become enemies of the cross:

Mat.12:30 He that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad

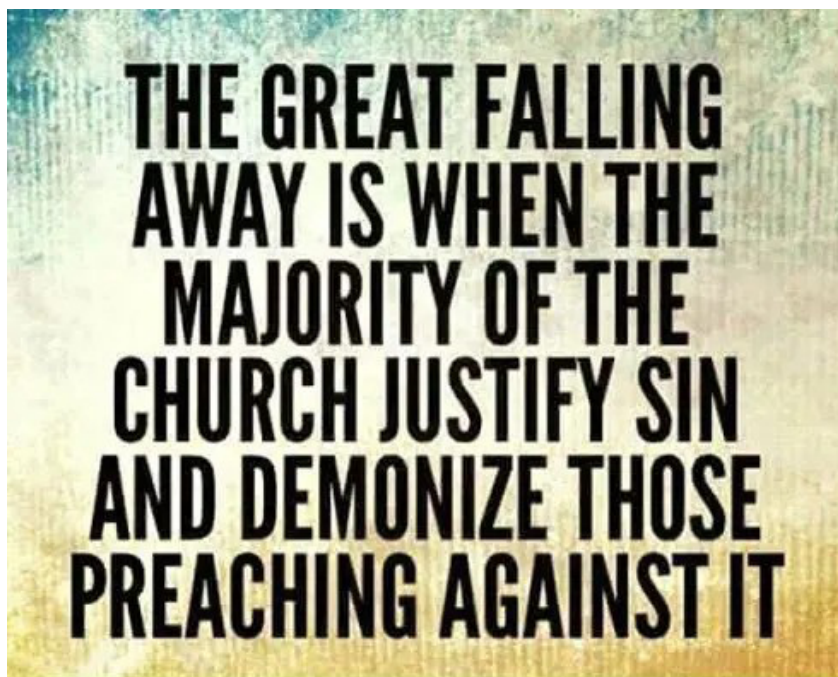
Phi.3:18 For many walk...they are enemies of the cross (Judas' backsliding:

Mat.26:14-15,47-50; 27:5.)

(Alexander's backsliding: 1Tim.1:19,20; 2Tim.4:14,15.)

Special chapters: Num.13:31-33,14:1-34; Neh.9:15-37; Psa.78, 106; Ezk.16; Lk.15:11-32; 2Pet.2.

Re edited by Jerry Finch from GLOBAL MISSIONS SYDNEY 1998.



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