

Backslider, God Wants YOU Back

A *backslider* is a person who once had salvation, but has since turned away from following the PRECIOUS Lord Jesus Christ to the point where he is now spiritually lost and dead again, just like he was before becoming saved through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21; Gal. 5:24; etc.).

The scriptural definition of a backslider is a person who strayed from the path of understanding (Prov. 21:16) and turned to crooked ways (Psa. 125:5). According to God, backsliding results in spiritual death (Gen. 2:17; Lk. 15:24; Rom. 8:13; James 1:14-16; etc.):

“If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does evil, he will DIE for it” (Ezek. 33:18).

“If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit,’ and, ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud’” (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

So, if you backslide, are you still saved? Not according to God’s word. There are no Christian adulterers, no Christian drunks, no Christian thieves, etc. However, that doesn’t mean you can’t return to God and salvation. In fact, God commands such (Jer. 3:22)! There are examples of both named and unnamed backsliders in the Bible, who turned away from God temporarily or even permanently. Some backsliders, like Peter and King David, returned to salvation, but some others never came back to God. Some examples of backsliders who *never* returned to God are King Saul, King Solomon, Judas Iscariot, those in Heb. 6:4-6, John 6:66, etc.

Heb. 6:4-6 and Heb. 10:26-29 have terrorized backsliders more than any other passages. Too few know those passages refer to people who committed *eternal sin* to return to the synagogues and therefore could not be brought back to God through repentance, unlike all others. Eternal sin (or unforgivable sin) is believing Jesus had a demon and by the power of the devil he performed his miracles (Mark 3:22-30). Such *unforgivable sin* has nothing to do with sexual sin, drunkenness, theft, murder, witchcraft, swindling, etc. All sins are forgivable except eternal sin. Since God took back the backslidden King David and the Apostle Peter upon their repentance, then why would anyone think God wouldn’t do the same for him?

God himself taught that a backslider can indeed be restored and find forgiveness (Luke 15:11-32). The backslider (or prodigal son in this case) repented when he came to his senses. A person who remains unrepentant and in sin that is dragging him to eternal fire (Mt. 13:41,42; 1 Cor. 6:9,10; Rev. 21:8; etc.) is not in his right spiritual senses. Although the prodigal son backslid for an unknown time period, perhaps even many years, and had engaged in wild living and sexual sin with prostitutes, he still found forgiveness; he was still able to return to God, and GOD WANTED HIM BACK!

The prodigal became *alive again*, and his lost spiritual condition reversed upon turning from his sins and humbly returning to the Father to serve him (Lk. 15:24). Compare this teaching to 1 Thess. 1:9b. The only time in the Bible we see the Father *running* is to welcome the repentant backslider back home! Remember this precious truth if you are a backslidden former Christian. Please also note that the Father was so happy to have the backslider back home that he hugged and kissed him and even celebrated his return with a feast (Lk. 15:20-23).

Some Christians who correctly reject the false teaching of *eternal security* wrongly think that no one who ever falls away can come back to salvation. This notion is clearly refuted by Jesus’ teaching here (Lk. 15:24), as well as by other passages (Rom. 11:19-23; James 5:19,20). Hence, a spiritually lost and dead person could be a person that was once saved. If you are a backslider, you can return to salvation and GOD WANTS YOU BACK. (Pass this on to another.)