

The Sin of “In-sliding”

Introduction

- To Backslide means: To lapse or fall backwards in your relationship with Christ. To lose interest in following and serving the Lord.
- Some Christians use terms like "lukewarm" or "faith that's grown cold" to describe a person who is spiritually backsliding. A believer who is "no longer on fire for the Lord" is another typical description of someone who is in a backslidden state.

1. In First Corinthians 10:12 we are warned about the sin of backsliding from God.

1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

2. Jeremiah often used “backsliding” to describe the unfaithful descent of Israel and Judah into idolatry and immorality. **Jeremiah 3:6, 8, 11-14**

3. Israel’s backsliding angered the Lord.

Isaiah 57:17 For the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry and struck him; I hid and was angry, And **he went on backsliding in the way of his heart.**

A. Yet, God was ready to forgive the backslider who presented himself to God with “a contrite and humble spirit” that trusted God in full repentance (Isaiah 57:15-16).

4. God pleaded with Israel and Judah through His prophet Jeremiah. **Jeremiah 3:12-13**

5. God forgives and heals the backslider who acknowledges his sin and returns to Him. **Jeremiah 3:22-25**

**A. Such is the love and mercy of the almighty God above.
Isaiah 66:1-2**

The Sin of In-sliding

- 1. There is another sin that is just as dangerous as backsliding that we often don't address as we should and that is the sin of "in-sliding."**
- 2. Backsliding Israel did not return to God by merely "sliding back" into God's fellowship and approval without humble repentance and contrition for sin.**
 - A. King David acknowledged his sin, pleaded for God's mercy and then God cleansed him.**
Psalms 51:3-4, 7-13
- 3. "In-sliding" describes how some, who previously fell away from the Lord, try to return to fellowship with God and His faithful people**
 - A. And some brethren allow it to be so.**
 - B. Instead of publicly repudiating his sin and error, this person (who previously slid away from God), now slides back into his previous position.**
 - 1) Quietly and discreetly. Without any confession of sin and/or repudiation of the same.**
 - 2) This person is reinstated to his previous place among the brethren, received as faithful by the faithful.**
- 4. When a backslider in-slides it may be that brethren assume he has repented.**
 - A. But, he confesses no sin. No repentant, prayerful approach to God takes place.**
 - 1) He simply reappears and is accepted as faithful to God.**

5. The in-slider does not confess his sins and acknowledge a changed heart toward his former transgression, therefore the following passages of scripture are not applied to him.

James 5:16 **Confess your trespasses to one another**, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

1 John 1:9 **If we confess our sins**, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

A. Nevertheless, he is accepted back into fellowship without ever addressing the problem of his sin in the Bible way.

- 1) What scripture gives God's approval for the backsliding Christian to in-slide?**
- 2) What scripture allows one who has been practicing sin to in-slide without repenting of his sin and prayerfully confessing it to God?**
- 3) Should brethren receive the in-slider as being faithful to the Lord?**
 - a) There is not a passage of scripture in the Bible that approves this way of helping a fallen saint overcome the bondage of sin and death.**

Galatians 6:1-2 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual **restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness**, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

In-sliding Fails to Scripturally Address the Presence of Sin

1. Scriptures do not teach and endorse the in-sliding of sinners.

Luke 13:5 I tell you, no; but **unless you repent you will all likewise perish.**"

A. This passage applies to backsliders too.

2. To allow the sinning Christian to slide back into his place among the saints without repentance and the prayerful confession of his sins is contrary to God's word.

Acts 8:22-24

A. The fruit of repentance is borne after repentance occurs.

2 Corinthians 7:10-11 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that **you sorrowed in a godly manner**: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! **In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.**

B. In-sliding is not repentance on the part of the sinner.

1) It is the reappearance of the sinner among the saints without any apparent repentance of sin!

In-sliding Knowingly Accepts A Sinner Into Fellowship In Spite of His Sin

- 1. We are warned against receiving one who does not bring the doctrine of Christ.**

2 John 1:9-11 **Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.** He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

- 2. Rather than warning the sinner of the danger of his past sins, in-sliding emphasizes peace where it has yet to be established between the sinner and God.**

Ephesians 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **but rather expose them.**

- 3. It is a false plea of “peace” without healing that accepts the backslider who has not repented of their sins.**

Jeremiah 6:14-15 They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' When there is no peace. **Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No!** They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down," says the LORD.

Here are two examples of in-sliding that warrants our attention as children of God and in an effort to strive to keep His church pure.

Forsaking the Assembling of Ourselves Together

- 1. Those who have previously forsaken the assembling of Christians often in-slide back into the worship gatherings.**
 - A. They show up after being absent from the worship assemblies (sometimes months at a time).**
 - 1) They find their old seat and sit down as if nothing was ever wrong.**
 - a) Often they are even “received” as if no sin ever happened; not a word of admonition, rebuke, or plea to fully repent is uttered.**
 - B. Did they not violate Hebrews 10:24-25 by forsaking the assembling of ourselves together?**
 - 1) If so, where is the admonition, warning them of spiritual danger?**
 - 2) Where is their repentance and prayerful confession of this public sin?**
 - a) Is this particular sin unworthy of a “contrite and humble spirit” that repents and confesses its sin against God?**
- 2. We should talk to the person about their sin.**
 - A. We should exhort them to repent and urge them to gain a renewed heart and life. They were overtaken in sin and need our help (Galatians 6:1-2).**
 - B. If they object, then there is clearly more work to do to save a soul from death**
James 5:19-20
 - C. We can’t leave the message that they did not really sin.**

Endorsing Preachers Who Teach Error

- 1. The passing of time does not equal repentance.**
- 2. When brethren teach error or hold up the hands of false teachers they cannot in-slide into acceptance and not repent.**
 - A. In the absence of repentance and the repudiation of error, what is it that approves of the false teacher and his supporters as now being worthy of our fellowship.**
 - B. When one has not rejected error its toleration, shall we nevertheless give him the right hand of fellowship in the hope that one day — maybe by seeing our good will — he will fully repent?**
 - C. Can the Christian who once endorsed the false teacher now in-slide as if nothing is wrong?**
 - 1) Compromise with error requires full repentance, not the silent acceptance that in-sliding allows.**
- 3. God's word tells us that we MUST warn against itching ears that grow tired of reproof and rebuking false doctrine and those who accommodate it.**
2 Timothy 4:2-5

Conclusion

- 1. One cannot in-slide into fellowship with God and His people.**
- 2. Sin separates us from God.**
 - A. Only when one humbles himself, repents of his sin, and confesses it to the Lord can the Christian expect God's forgiveness.**

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Acts 8:22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

- 3. Where there has been backsliding there must now be repentance.**
 - A. To give our approval to less endorses compromise with error and comforts the sinner in his sin.**
 - 1) As a result, we will give an account for our actions in the day of judgment.**

