

Why Some Christians Backslide From Faith On God

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A previous lesson revealed why many professed Christians fall away from the Truth, and why Satan regains control of their life. That happens because a circumstance comes into one's life, in which they refuse to meet it in God's way (according to the way His Word instructs the Christian, and by following the example set by His Son, Who told us to follow Him). And God's "voice issued from the cloud", (Mark 9:7), saying, "This is My Son, dearly loved: listen to Him ."

So, the person who backslides from true faith in Christ, did not exercise their power of choice correctly (in some part of their life), when they chose not to listen to Jesus' instructions, and they chose not to meet a temptation in God's way.

Nevertheless, our Savior (Jesus Christ), has already ascended to Heaven, and He is at the right side of God's throne, pleading for each one of us to come back to Him. "Return to Me,.... and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty."(Malachi 3:7).

So, we can see that God requires a willingness on our part, to make a genuine repentance and a sincere confession of those sins, mistakes, and wrong choices. God is not looking for a half-hearted confession from us (that didn't work for Ananias and Sapphira)(Acts chapter 5:), and only God knows what is really in our heart when we confess to Him. So, we can't go half-way with God by just saying we are sorry (to get out of trouble for the time being). Our conviction has to be sincere. God knows our heart! (what our intentions really are).

The next step is for us to believe that we are forgiven, pardoned, and cleansed, and freed from the devil's power to have us to fall back into sin.

We must believe that God's Holy Spirit is going to help us decide scripturally and be willing to follow His guidance, (instead of relying on our own plans of the self-life) (which Satan will always suggest if our decision is not final to do God's will).

If we have made a final decision to meet every situation scripturally, then the Holy Spirit can inspire us to follow Christ (in all things in our life). That is, getting back to God right, and being born again of the Spirit. That is what it means to make a final surrender to do the will of God in all circumstances.

By using our power of choice right (when temptation comes) we will be in a position to draw from God's strength and power to bring us to victory. God will keep us from falling away from real faith in Him, because we have made a final decision to meet things Scripturally (and remain trusting Him).(1 John 5:18 tells us) "but He who is 'God's Child' keeps him, and the evil one cannot touch him.

If we had to go on a long journey, but we started out by saying to ourselves, "if everything goes okay and the weather is good, I will go,... but if things do not go to suit me, I am going to turn back,"... we would very often and very quickly turn back. We might as well not have started in the first place if we are going to give in and give up at the first difficulty.

It is the same in the Christian life. Jesus told us there would be persecutions along the way. If we start out with a limit on how far we will go in doing the will of God, (thinking that we will turn back if things don't go as we had planned, then we have only made a limited surrender of our life to God. We have left a plank on the bridge (instead of burning behind us the bridge of self-trust). That kind of limited surrender will allow the devil to use it as a weapon to destroy us for eternity, (if it is not repented of).

If we have it in our mind that we will meet someone or some thing scripturally (as long as they treat us right), we can be sure that we will be tested in that way. We might as well make a final decision, that with God's help we are going to meet the person (or situation) right in the first place. We will only have to meet it again if we don't. The mistreatment will continue and keep recurring, until we meet the wrong treatment in a Christlike way (which is to not retaliate, but to turn the other cheek, as Jesus commanded). (Matt.5: 39) "But I tell you not to resist a wicked man, but if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to him as well."

When one... chooses... not to listen to God's Son (to meet things right),... it blocks the influence of God's Spirit. It is where and why the devil is able to gain an influence over a person and cause them to fall away from real faith in Christ.

Adam's wrong choice to believe the lie (in what seemed to be a small circumstance), enabled the devil to take possession of him, and he fell away from trusting God. He (Adam) then began following his own efforts of the self-life. He lost the blessing and guidance of the Holy Spirit and showed no sign of repentance.

Again, the real cause of people falling away from the Truth, is the type of surrender they made to God. In Jesus Sermon on the Mount (and all through the New Testament), we have God's standard of righteousness. If anyone is willing to accept it, and to maintain an attitude of complete surrender to God's will,... He will keep them from falling away from the faith.(Jude 1: 24-25) says, "To Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy, to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen."

If we want God to keep us from falling away from the faith, our surrender must be final, so He can take possession of our life. If our surrender is not right, we can be deceived and destroyed forever, by Satan (who prowls about like a lion, seeking whom he may devour).

If a worldly person had a thousand dollars, and put five hundred in the bank, and someone stole the five hundred they had on them-selves, they could not blame the bank for that loss. If they had given the whole amount to the bank, the bank would have been responsible for the whole amount.

It is the same with God, if we give Him full possession of ourselves (not just go half-way with our surrender), He would be responsible to keep us, and He will protect us. People who believe in 'Once Saved, Always Saved', don't make a right surrender to God in the first place. They believe that if they just accept historical facts concerning the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross,... then they are saved and cannot be lost, even if they fail to do the will of God (as Jesus said we must do) by obeying (or following) the teaching given in the New Testament.

The truth is, however, they never allowed

God to have their life in the first place, (because they never fully surrendered their self-will, to do God's will in everything, and most importantly to learn from His teaching and training).

Those who fall away haven't learned to trust God to comfort them in spirit or body (instead of depending on other persons, things, or devices to seek comfort). Nor did they learn to trust God day by day financially (but instead, having a little cushion stored up(saved up), or a plan of the self-life to fall back on). Rather than getting rid of laid up money (and other treasures) by helping the poor (as our Savior commanded), they try to amass treasures for themselves, and try to increase their laid-up money, gambling on the stock market or other ways that Satan devises. All too often, they deceive others and convince them to accept their plans of the self-life.

All of this misplaced trust is unbelief.. as well as a disregard for God's Word that leads one to Life Eternal (and the Bible explains that unbelief... is idolatry). It is trusting on something else aside from God, ... and idols are in a multitude of forms in the life of an idolater. The Bible instructs us to come out from among idolaters (Isaiah 52:)(2 Cor.6:17), "and separate yourselves, says the Lord" (which means, not to seek their company nor keep close fellowship with them). (Doing so can be spiritually harmful to you and your family). (Romans 16:17-20) says, "I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions, and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but(serving) their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery, they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.(the apostle said) The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." "The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you."

The Holy Spirit (Who prepares a person to be ready for Eternal Life, through His sanctifying work within their heart), is grieved to be shut out of one's life, (for He wants no one to perish).(Ephes.4:30) warns us, "And beware of grieving the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you have been sealed in preparation ... for the day of Redemption." That preparation is the spiritual "growth in holiness", "apart from which no one will see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14).

Luke 14: Jesus describes another phase of a full surrender to God, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me, cannot be my disciple."

"What does that have to do with our surrender?" (one might ask). It means that at some time in our Christian life, we will be called upon to go against the wishes of our unsaved loved ones. We may be called to put God and His will ahead of a member of our family (who is not following the Truth that God has enlightened us to understand). We may even be called upon to risk our life for the sake of obeying God's Word, and, if our surrender is not genuine; if we have not settled it that God and His will shall come ahead of everything and everybody; then we will take a big fall spiritually (at the first opposition from the devil).

A real surrender to God for divine healing, means that we have settled it not to use a human remedy (or get a doctor under any circumstance), whatever the risk may be.

A true surrender to God for our financial affairs, means that under no circumstance will we borrow, beg, or take anything on credit; not even give a hint by word or act that we are in need of a thing. If our children were starving (and it seemed that we were all going to end up in a poorhouse), we would not seek help from anyone but God.

A final surrender like that, will place God (and all of His resources) at our side to supply what is needed. Instead of landing in the poorhouse (as Satan would picture to our mind), we can live in prosperity, not lacking anything we need (when our surrender is final to keep our place of trust centered on God). It is just as important to meet our financial battles in God's way, as it is to meet any other battle (because it perfects our trust on the Son of God).

Physical battles are most important to be met right ,... as well as meeting Scripturally the mean things that are said and done to us. When we have truly made a final surrender of our life to God, the wonderful part is, He will not allow anything to touch us, that He will not also inspire us to meet right and be victorious.

Every circumstance met in God's way, will increase our "spiritual growth" and knowledge of God. It means enthronement of the Christ-life within us; and of course, death of the self-life (that

of, depending on other sources for peace of mind, comfort of body, temporal supply, or physical healing).

If one refuses to meet a temptation according to God's will, things can work out the opposite, and, we will lose out spiritually (whether we are aware of that or not). Satan will get control over a person (that he did not have before), and God's power will become less and less. When we shut out God's power, He cannot keep us delivered and protected from Satan's attacks, (and cannot prevent our falling away from faith in His Son). We cannot be under the control of Satan and the Holy Spirit at the same time. One or the other will be in control of our life.

Our surrender to God must be at all costs, as it was with the three Hebrew children, Daniel, and other true Christians in the Bible. Many people have made a decision to put their home and family in God's hands, but their decision was not a final one. Deep in their heart there was a hidden plan, such as; Al will trust God if every- thing goes well, but if the husband (or wife) becomes disagreeable, or if the children get disobedient, then "I'll have to take action."

We will never get any victory in our home and with the family, as long as we have a reservation in our heart to use force and self effort to control them (or the situation). In order to put our family into God's hands to stay, we must settle it that if adult children became more disobedient than ever, we would not take any forceful action of ourselves to change them. When we have said our last word and taken our last action of the self-life to convict them, then God can work quickly to change them (by His Spirit and from within their heart, where the change really has to be made). When we get out of the way and allow God to work, He can bring them into the Truth right (and without bringing any unscriptural habits along with them).

It is the limit that we put on our surrender to do God's will, which allows Satan to hinder us spiritually, and, if not repented of, it will allow Satan and his agents to deceive us and cause us to fall away from the faith. Temptations we meet are for purpose of perfecting our surrender to do God's Will. That is why we are tempted in so many different ways. (2 Cor.13:5) "Test yourselves to discover whether you are true believers: put your own selves under examination. Or do you not know that Jesus Christ is within you unless you are insincere?"

(Let us consider for a moment), that Abraham, our 'prince leader' in the faith, was already declared righteous by God, Himself. (Gen.15:6), Abram believed the LORD and He credited it to him as righteousness. (Proponents of the eternal security myth (or O.S.A.S.), would say that Abraham was already saved at that point). However, many years later, "God tested Abraham"(Gen. 22:1 says). He still had to pass God's supreme test of his faith to see if his surrender was final to do God's will in his life and be saved, for Jesus said, "only those who do the will of my Father in Heaven." (To do God's will) Abraham had to raise a knife over his son Isaac to slay him.(Imagine how we would feel, if God instructed us to raise a knife over a son of ours.) However, Abraham passed the test of his faith and surrender, by raising the knife over his son, but God 'stayed his hand'.(Heb.11:19) "For he reckoned (believed) that God is even able to raise a man up from among the dead, and, figuratively speaking it was from among the dead that he received Isaac again." For God said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only by son, from Me." Abraham (who had already been declared righteous by God, many years before), had just passed the final test of his faith! (So much for the eternal security myth of O.S.A.S., which says we don't need to remain in the faith till the end, to receive the crown.) But Jesus explained clearly (Reve.2:10) that you will be tested and persecuted, but to "be faithful to end (unto death) and I will give you the "Crown of Life"!

So, when our surrender is perfect, and we have come to the place that neither life nor death, friends nor foe, men, or devils, will ever cause us to disobey God, then, and only then, will our troubles disappear. The efforts of Satan to make our life unhappy and unpleasant, will be defeated. God's fullness of blessing spiritually, physically, financially, in the home, workshop, and everything else that concerns us, will be turned into a peaceful garden.

It is the mercy of God that Satan is allowed to tempt us in many ways. As we meet those temptations according to God's Will, it will perfect our surrender to Him, and will establish us firmly in the Truth of God. As we progress in the Christian life, we should be more convinced than ever before, that the real 'Gospel plan' must be lived out

in every detail of our life, in order to be prepared for "Eternal Life" (as well as receive His fullness of blessing in this life).

Two of the most important things we need to understand (if we want to be protected from falling away from the "Truth of God"), are; first, to be sure that our surrender to God is genuine and final, and that we will not turn our back on God's. The second point is; that we must apply God's plan (or Word) to every circumstance that arises in our life, whether someone does a wrong to us, a temptation in our "spiritual life", a financial battle, or physical oppression.

Truth under any circumstance (whether or not it pleases our family, friends, or whoever).

A final surrender like that to do God's Will, will shut down the power and work of Satan to make our life unhappy, and it will open the door for God to come in and make our Christian life a pleasant, 'learning experience' (with 'Eternal Life' as the 'ultimate reward'!)



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MAIN POINTS of 'WHY SOME CHRISTIANS BACKSLIDE:

1. The cause of why people fall away, is our not making a final surrender to God.
2. The importance of making right choices and getting back to God right is explained (and we never lose that power of choice).
3. The example of God's testing of Abraham's faithful obedience, after many years in a life of faith is mentioned (emphasizing that our faith must endure to the end.)
4. Most importantly, if our surrender is genuine and final, God will protect us from falling away from faith in HIM (when we do not compromise on our commitment to Him).