

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY REMINDER

Volume XXI

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Number 1

BACKSLIDING

by Billy Sunday
(1862 - 1935)



“Thy own wickedness shall correct thee. Thy backsliding shall reprove thee. Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts” (Jeremiah 11:19).

Many start the voyage of the Christian life under sending skies and upon smooth waters, but as they sail out of the harbor the sky becomes dark and the craft of their faith crashes upon the rocks. At first they are careful to obey the command of God, but after the revival they neglect their duties and finally come to wreck.

God speaks much of the sin of backsliding, and in the Bible has spoken of it in many places. There are all kinds of backsliding -

First, There Is the Careless Kind. The invitation is never given at the revival but there are those who will respond to it, and for a time will live as Christians should. Then, when the revival is over and the routine of everyday life begins, they slip gradually back into their former ways. *They become negligent and drift back to the old haunts and the old gang.*

Oh, it is easy to think of things divine when the revival is on and there is inspiration on every side and the bands are playing and the crowds are marching. I've sometimes thought, almost, that it might be a Godsend to many a community if it could only be swept by typhoid fever or pneumonia or scarlet fever just after a good revival and before the people have a chance to slide back.

The second class of backsliders is the class that started soberly and seriously, but not seriously enough. They do not make a **complete surrender**. If you secure a balloon with 100 ropes and cut 99 of them, the balloon will still be held, but don't cut the shore lines, they have failed to cut loose from sin, and it is drawing them back.

A friend of mine holding a meeting, asked how many who were present had been Christians, but were now backsliders. Finally, forty fessed up. Then he asked them for the reasons for their falling away. Finally, a man got up and said he backslid through believing that he could be a Christian and keep his store open on Sundays.

A young lady arose and said that she backslid because of cards. A friend had given a card party and she had to give one in reciprocity. She said she had invited a young man to attend, but that he didn't know what kind of a party it was to be. He came, but when he found out he said he was sorry, but he must go, for he could not stay there. *“I admired him for his loyalty to his religion, he made me feel that I wasn't worthy to have my name as a church member,”* the young lady said.

Another man stood up and said: *“I backslid when I voted for the saloon.”* You bet he did or he would not have voted for the dirty, rotten thing. Why, he backslid before he voted that ticket, or he wouldn't have voted it!

A young lady said: *“I thought I could be a member of the church and dance.”* Sure she could. You can be a member of the church and a burglar too, but not a member of the body of Christ. She said, *“I attended a dance and found my desire to pray diminishing. I attended another and I found my desire to pray had become nebulous. And then,”* she said, *“my desire to pray disappeared.”*

I tell you I never saw a drinking, dancing, card playing Christian who amounted to anything! The dance is a quagmire of wreckage. It's as rotten as hell! You wait until I get at it.

(continued inside)

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**



Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today** - OK? Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Lois Mae Floyd ----- Pianist/ Organist
 ----- Greeter
 Shayne Hooper, Brian Crawford, Charity Crawford ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, ----- Outreach
 Bertha Segebart ----- Custodian
 Flowers ----- Shirley White, Charity Crawford

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Bertha Segebart
 Cradle Roll 2: VOLUNTEER NEEDED!
 Sun. Eve. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Piper Quinnelly
 Cradle Roll 2: Ryan Quinnelly
 Wed. Eve. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
 Cradle Roll 2: VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of December 27, 2015

Sunday School ----- 19
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 25
 No Service, Sunday Eve., 12/27/15
 Wed. Eve. Service, 12/30/15 ----- 12

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of December 27, 2015

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 620.00
 Plumbing Repair Fund ----- \$ 445.00
Total Received for Week of 12/27/15: \$ 1,065.00

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

LISTEN TO -



ABIDINGRADIO.COM

PLUMBING REPAIR FUND -

Amount For Entire Project ----- \$6,606.99
 Amount Received So Far ----- \$ 445.00
Total STILL NEEDED to pay off: \$6,161.99

AUDITORIUM AIR CONDITIONER FUND -

Amount For Entire Project ----- \$5,000.00
 Amount Received So Far ----- \$ 85.00
Total STILL NEEDED to pay off: \$4,915.00

I believe more people in the church backslide because of the dance, card playing and theater gadding then through the saloons. But hold on there, don't you think for a minute that I'm in favor of the dirty, stinking, rotting saloons!

I'm against a lot of amusements popular among church members, as you people are going to find out before I am through in Boston. I don't give that (snapping his fingers) whether you like my preaching or not - understand? It's a question of whether you are interested in decency. If you live wrong you can't die right. Emerson said: "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."

This is an age of incompleteness of unfinished things. Life is full of half done things. Education is begun and abandoned. Obedience to the law of God is begun - and given up. People start in business - and fail. They attempt to learn a trade - and don't do it thoroughly. A hound once started running after a stag and after running for a while it saw a fox and turned after it. A little farther along it saw a rabbit and ran after that, and finally wound up holing a field mouse. So it is with so many who enter the Christian life. They started to hunt and compromised on a glass of booze. They enter a royal race, but compromised on a glass of beer or on some little gain through dishonesty.

Not every backslider is an apostate, but every apostate is a backslider. Peter was a backslider, but he came back and preached that sermon at Pentecost. Judas was a backslider, and what he did so preyed upon his mind that he did not want it. He went out but he never came back.

I have never tabooed but two towns in my life and one of them was a little town in Iowa, where I once held a meeting before I really became an evangelist. That town had an infidel club of 150 members. There were only two church members in the place, and there was an interrogation point after them at that. They could have started a founding asylum of their own in that community. My life was not safe there - they threw stones at me in the streets.

A storekeeper there told me he was going to sell out and leave the town for purely moral reasons, at a loss of about \$8000.00. He said that he had daughters and that there wasn't a young man in the town that he would trust with them. He said that any young man in that town were to call on any of his daughters he wouldn't go upstairs to bed unless he had a Gatling gun he could train on the visitor at a moments notice. It is not only for here and now, it is not only for a time, but it is for eternity. It is one of the great things. All other things are incidents.

The leader of that God-forsaken, iniquitous gang was a man named Dickson, who ran a one-horse country grocery business in a place about as big as a boxcar. He had been a Christian - used to be a classleader in a Methodist church. He kept a store. I used to pass the store as I went to preach, and I would see the bunch, as many as 40 sometimes, sitting around in the little store.

Whenever a new preacher came they would assemble to talk him over, and if old Dickson gave consent, they would go to

church to hear him. I remember one old brush rat - he had bushy whiskers with a dirty brown streak down the middle, and he could spit 30 yards and hit a fly. I'll bet my life he could hit a post down there. He used to come in late, with one pant leg tucked in his boot, no coat or vest, no galoshes - just a rope around his paunch - the old son of perdition.

He'd sit down and turn the hose on the wall. He looked to me as if he had had only one bath in his life and that one when he was born. He came clattering down the aisle - old hair and beard twisted - looked like a cows tail. He started as a backslider, ended in apostasy, just as disease ends in death if not checked.

In business life, crises come unforeseen. Hard times come. When they do, you may be able to get away with a overdraft at the bank if the cashier knows you too well. At the bank of heaven no checks on God's mercy, when signed by God's loyal followers have ever been turned down. If you come with honest heart God will honor the appeal if your hands are red with blood.

In a campaign like this, for some little thing many men will sell out. There are men whose honor hang like meat in butcher shop, for sale for so much a pound. I thank God though, that most men are honest and most women are virtuous, and that even the minority can be made to yield when you preach the Gospel right.

If I were to go to a man and say: "They say you're an old liar." Would he say, "Well, Bill, I suppose I am, but you mustn't put the standard too high for poor, weak humanity, and I'm only human." If I were to say to him, "They say you are an old thief and that they have to hide everything when you come around." Would he say he supposed it was true, but I mustn't set the standard too high for poor human nature? If I say, "They tell me that you are a rotten old libertine and that you have ruined many innocent girls, that you would crush a woman's virtue as quickly as a snake beneath your foot." Would he say he supposed it was true, but I mustn't set the standard too high for poor human nature?

No sir. If he were anything of a man at all he would say, "*I demand, sir, that you prove your charges.*" But that's not what a man does when you charge him with being a backslider or to say that he is a liar. Oh, for the Presbyterian or Baptist or Episcopal backslider who stands up and talks about poor human nature - yet to say a man is a backslider is to say that he is a liar. Or, for power to come to you and show what you ought to be.

I can imagine a man being untrue in business. I can imagine him being untrue in politics. I can even - but it is difficult - imagine him being untrue to the vows made at the altar - **but to be untrue to God!**

Be untrue to God and you will lose heaven and lose all!

Be true to God and you will lose hell!

I pray that God will so work upon the consciences of you backsliders who hear me that you will cry salt tears and turn and roll upon your pillows when you go home tonight and seek a dry spot that he may reproach you until you have been stung into a

return to the God to whom you have been false.

A heathen woman named Panathea was famous for her great beauty, and King Cyrus wanted her for his harem. He sent his representatives to her and offered her money and jewels to come, but she repulsed them and spurned their advances. Again he sent them, this time with offers more generous and tempting; but again she sent them away with scorn. A third time she said "Nay." Then King Cyrus went in person to see her and he doubled and tripled and quadrupled the offers his men had made, but still she would not go. She told him that she was a wife, and that she was true to her husband.

He said "Panathea, where dwellest thee?"

"In the arms and on the breast of my husband." She said.

"Take her away." Said Cyrus. "She is of no use to me."

Then he put her husband in command of the charioteers and sent him into battle at the head of the troops. Panathea knew what this meant - that her husband had been sent in that he might be killed.

She waited while the battle raged and when the field was cleared she shouted his name and searched for him and finally found him wounded and dying. She knelt and clasped him in her arms, and as they kissed, his lamp of life went out forever.

King Cyrus heard of the mans death and came to the field. Panathea saw him coming, careening on his camel like a ship in a storm. She called, "Oh, husband! He comes - he shall not have me. I was true to you in life and will be true to you in death." And she drew her dead husband's poniard from its sheath, drove it into her own breast and fell dead across his body.

King Cyrus came up and dismounted. He removed his turban and knelt By the dead husband and wife and thanked his God that he had found in his kingdom one true and virtuous woman that his money could not buy nor his power intimidate.

Preachers - the problem of this century is the problem of the first century. We must win the world for God and we will win the world for God just as soon as we have men and woman who will be faithful to God and will not lie and will not sell out to the devil! ■

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

□ ***THIRTY PERCENT OF SOUTHERN BAPTISTS ACCEPTING OF HOMOSEXUALITY*** - According to a new Pew Research poll, 30 percent of Southern Baptists agree that "homosexuality should be accepted by society" ("Nearly Third of Southern Baptists," Pulpitandpen.org, Dec. 18, 2015). Evangelist David Cloud has long said that Southern Baptist churches are the major reason why "the South" is so morally corrupt. A large percentage of Southerners are Southern Baptist, a percentage large enough to set the moral tone for the region, and that percentage was much larger just a few years ago. What you have in the "Bible Belt," for the most part, is a worldly lifestyle covered with a thin veneer of churchianity. The average

Southerner can talk a good talk about knowing the Lord, but his walk doesn't match his talk.

This is not a new thing. Much the same condition prevailed when the rock & roll culture blasted on the scene with Elvis in the 50s and the Beatles in the 60s. In those days, Southern Baptist kids were right in the middle of it, loving every aspect of it, including the dating, the dancing, the "petting," and the vain pursuit of worldly "cool." Bro. Cloud says, "Growing up in Southern Baptist churches, I can only recall a bare handful of sincere Christian young people who obeyed God and separated from the world. My younger sisters have the same memory, as we have discussed many times over the years. Those who walk in lock-step with the world will adapt the world's thinking."

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Corinthians 15:33).

□ ***ROME SAYS JEWS ARE SAVED, SHOULD NOT BE TARGET OF EVANGELISM*** - An official report published by Rome says that Jews (and everyone else) are saved, and Jews should not be the target of evangelism. The document, "*The Gifts and Calling of God are Irrevocable*", was published by The Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, one of Rome's many ecumenical ventures that began with the Second Vatican Council.

The fifth chapter of the report "***emphasizes that through Jesus Christ--and through his death and resurrection--all people have a part in salvation, all are saved. Although Jews cannot believe in Jesus Christ as the universal redeemer, they have a part in salvation, because the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.***"

The sixth chapter deals with evangelism, and urges Catholics to "**refrain from attempts at conversion or mission toward Jews**" ("Summary of 'The Gifts and Calling of God,'" Vatican Information Service, Dec. 10, 2015).

If Jews are saved by means of the covenants of God without faith in Jesus Christ, why did Christ Himself call upon them to repent and believe (Luke 13:1-5), and why did He warn them of eternal judgment when they rejected Him (Matthew 11:20-24)?

The Roman Catholic Church is the heart and soul of Mystery Babylon, and she is uniting with all of her daughters today. Note that this latest document says that ALL men have a part in salvation. It is impossible to be more ecumenical than that. "***For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:7).***

