Braggs church of Christ
• “We must all be warned of the danger of falling, vividly illustrated through the hundreds of thousands who fell in the wilderness. Preachers who love God and his people will continually sound the alarm.” Gary Hampton
Some Causes Of Backsliding
I. Definitions

• **Backsliding** - to relapse into bad habits, sinful behavior, or undesirable activities.

• **Apostasy** - a total desertion of or departure from one's religion, principles, party, cause, etc.

• Dictionary.com
I. Definitions

- **Fall away** – To forsake the faith; to turn from Christ
II. Some Examples Of Backsliders

• 1. Demas
• 2 Tim. 4:10
• “For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica”
II. Some Examples Of Backsliders

• 2. Prodigal son
• Lk. 15:24

• “For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.”
II. Some Examples Of Backsliders

- 3. Simon the Sorcerer
- Acts 8:22

- “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee”
II. Some Examples Of Backsliders

- 4. Christians today
- 1 Cor. 10:12
- “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”
III. Some Causes Of Backsliding
1. Some Turn Back Because Of Persecution

- **Persecute** = To afflict or harass constantly so as to injure or distress; to oppress cruelly and especially because of religion
  
- Mt. 13:21

- Rev. 2:10
Mt. 13:21

• “Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth (endureth) for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”
Rev. 2:10

- “...be thou **faithful unto death**, and I will give thee a crown of life.”
2. Some Blame God

• They fail to understand that God allows hardships due to man’s initial rebellion
• Genesis 3:16-19
Gen. 3:16-19

• “Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying,
Gen. 3:16-19

• Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”
2. Some Blame God

- They blame God for every adverse thing that happens in their lives
2. Some Blame God

• Look at Job – We see that God does not shield His people – even the best – from life’s tragedies

• Job 13:15
Job 13:15

• “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him”
3. Many Christians Have Followed False Teaching

- Mt. 7:15
- Acts 20:29-30
- 1 Tim. 4:1-3
- 2 Tim. 4:1-4
Mt. 7:15

• “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”
Acts 20:29-30

• “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them”
1 Tim. 4:1-3

• “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
1 Tim. 4:1-3

- Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."
“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; **Preach the word**; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."
3. Many Christians Have Followed False Teaching

• In our day we have seen far too many leave the faith – turn from Christ because of false teachers and false teaching

• Jer. 6:16
Jer. 6:16

• “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.”
3. Many Christians Have Followed False Teaching

• Many ridicule “the old paths” and seek to fashion a church that fits their personal desires
4. Many Simply Ease Away From Christ

• Many *slowly* drift away from the truth and stop being faithful
  • Heb. 2:1-3
  • Mt. 13:22
  • 2 Tim. 4:10
Heb. 2:1-3

• “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;
Heb. 2:1-3

- How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him”
Mt. 13:22

• “He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”
2 Tim. 4:10

• “For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world...”
4. Many Simply Ease Away From Christ

• “...some members of the church are languishing in a pigpen of sin...and they no longer can even smell the stench.” Mike Riley
IV. Preventing Backsliding

• 1 Cor. 10:13
• Jn. 15:6
1 Cor. 10:13

• “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”
Jn. 15:6

• “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”
No One Gains By Backsliding

- The church loses a member
- The Lord loses a servant
- The brethren lose a brother or sister
No One Gains By Backsliding

• The community loses a Christian influence
• The backslider loses his soul!
• “Only the devil can be happy over it…”
Conclusion: **CURE** for Backsliding

- Repent
- Confess wrongs
- Pray for forgiveness
- Stand fast, be strong
References

• Article by Mike Riley
• Ready Reference For Growing Christians, Paul Sain
• Spiritual Sword, Vol., 42 #3, “Faithful Unto Death, Gary Hampton
• “Backsliding, Its Causes and Results, George W. Butterfield