

I. Introduction.

II. How can a godly person backslide?

- A. There are no more worlds to conquer. II Sam. 1-4, 6, 8, 10
- B. Limitations are faced for the first time. II Sam. 7
- C. Lethargy sets in. II Sam. 11:1
- D. Idleness and boredom lead to sinful diversions. II Sam. 11:2

III. David's mid-life failure continues to be repeated in the lives of many people today.

- A. They have achieved success in their life's work.
- B. They have reached a plateau and dreams have died.
- C. Boredom and laziness set in.
- D. They seek sinful diversions.

IV. What are the spiritual causes of backsliding?

- A. Sin proceeds from the heart. Mark 7:21-23 Ps. 51:10,12
- B. Ingratitude. II Sam. 12:7-8
- C. Undervaluing the things of God. II Sam. 12:9-10 Gen. 25:9 Rev. 2:4 Jer. 17:5-8
- D. Idolatry. Isa. 55:1-2
 - 1. People turn to idols to bring the satisfaction only God gives. Isa. 55:1-2
 - 2. The backslider needs to realize his problem is not that the world is passing him by, but rather that he is not valuing God and finding fulfillment in Him.

V. How can you overcome (or avoid) backsliding?

- A. Be on your guard. I Ti. 4:16 Acts 20:28 Pr. 4:23
 - 1. Don't think that it can't happen to you. I Cor. 10:12
 - 2. Neglect of the small things can lead to a big disaster. James 1:15
 - 3. It is possible for a spiritual leader (or any other Christian) to carry on his duties with apparent success while harboring secret sin.
 - 4. Remember the consequences of your fall. II Sam. 12:10-15 Pr. 7:22
- B. Seek help. *Don't wait for Nathan to show up on your doorstep!*
 - 1. Make yourself accountable.
 - 2. If you are living a lie, come clean. Js. 5:16 Ps. 32:1-5 51:17
 - 3. Watch out for one another. Ga. 6:1-2 Pr. 27:6

C. Remain faithful to your present calling.

1. Continue to cultivate the gifts and opportunities God has given you, whatever your vocation may be. II Ti. 1:6 Col. 3:23
2. Accept each phase of life is God's plan for you. Ecc. 3:1,11 Ti. 2:3f
3. Make good use of the time God has given you. He is not done with you yet. Psalm 90:12,17 Pr. 20:29
4. Be determined to finish well. I Cor. 9:27 II Ti. 4:6-8

D. Find your joy in the LORD.

1. Put off the false hope of satisfaction or bliss from earthly things. Isa. 55:2
2. Cultivate a living relationship with God.
3. Be thankful for God's past faithfulness to you.
4. Learn the secret of being content in the present. Phil. 4:11f
5. Keep a redemptive focus.
6. Live in light of the future. I John 3:2-3 II Pet. 3:11 II Cor. 4:17-18 Rom. 8:18
7. Your legacy is in heaven. Mt. 6:19-21

VI. Concluding application.

Discussion Questions for Family Worship

1. What circumstances in King David's life may have led up to his fall into sin?
2. How do men and women today face the same temptations?
3. What are the spiritual causes of David's spiritual fall?
4. How can *idolatry* lead to backsliding?
5. Why does everyone need to be on guard against imitating David's sin?
6. What should you do in order to prevent backsliding?
7. How can we help each other?
8. What should you do if you sense you are backsliding?
9. How can you have a joy which is completely secure?