



ACCM

Bible Study: Thursday, November 1st, 2018.

TOPIC: THE BACKSLIDDEN CHRISTIAN Part 6

TEXT: Luke 19: 1 - 10

There is no individual, dead or alive that has demonstrated restoration more than the Lord Jesus Christ. During His ministry on earth, He restored spiritual life to many individuals; whether Mary Magdalene, the woman caught in adultery or Zacchaeus the tax collector as we have just read. The striking part of the story in our text is that Jesus, although He knew that this man had an immoral record, he chose to spend the night with him. Jesus' attitude or His relationship with Zacchaeus immediately brought about his repentance in line with Exodus 22:1. As a result of his encounter with Jesus, he promised to restore 4x whatever he might have taken from anyone falsely. When you compare the statement of Zacchaeus with that of the prodigal son, you will find very striking similarities. (Compare Luke 19:8 with 15:2). True repentance comes when we create the opportunity for the sinner or a backslider to repent. This opportunity must be created in any way possible to ensure that the backslider returns home. Today, in our continuation of our study of the backslidden Christian, we are going to

talk about steps to restoring a backslidden brother or sister. May the Lord grant us wisdom.

HOW SHOULD WE RELATE WITH BACKSLIDERS?

Make efforts to get them back: What efforts did the shepherd make to bring his lost sheep back, what effort did the woman make to find her lost coin. **Luke 19:5.**

Love is very essential when dealing with a backslider **Luke 15: 20, 22-24**

We must not use the period of restoration for condemnation. **John 8:11**

1) HOW SHOULD THE CHURCH RESTORE A BACKSLIDER?

- a) Identify the type of backslider
 - 1. Is he a sheep
 - 2. Is he a coin
 - 3. Is he a son

I dare to add; is he the one on the tree top?

The underlying approach is LOVE. I Peter 4:8.

2) WHAT ARE THE UNIQUE PERSONALITY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DIFFERENT BACKSLIDERS?

If a **sheep backslider**, go after it and know that time of essence. This is a backslider that you need to tell beautiful things about the fellowship to bring him or her back. It could be in danger and continue to go in

the wrong direction. It might never return until it dies. It might find some other sheepfold and stay there even if it will not benefit him. You may need to ask questions about him from others, so it could lead you to him. Remember they did not want to backslide. They simply slipped away because of one attraction of the other. Constant fellowship will be needed for this sheep. Place yourself on his face and bible study is highly recommended because this is the backslider that has poor understanding about the care of the world. If it feels good do it kind of Christian. We need to put this backslider on our shoulders and return with it. A rope on its neck might not do it good.

For a coin backslider, you must look for it till you find it and it may not be far away. The coin backslider could be very passive and will not respond to all your persuasions. He is likely going to ignore you despite all your efforts to restore him. You may have to spend extra money to be able to get it back. He may not be happy where he is but will not take a decision to return. He will rather sink into deep depressions and will not seek help. At this point he is extremely vulnerable to anything, both good and evil. You never give up until you find him because he will return if you find him. Never let anyone else find it otherwise you have lost it forever. You must be very diligent and calculative.

Constantly put yourself around him. This is the one to whom visitation is extremely important

For the coin and the sheep type of backslider, they may never return

For a son backslider, you may need to be more patient than taking any physical action. You must show every empathy in this world because he

may consider himself a loser and as such does not need your love. He is unique in that he has a mind to rationalize. Ensure that every opportunity for his rationalization will lead him back home. Love is of great essence. Prayer is extremely needed because he could swing anyway. Constant phone calls, texts, whatsapp might be useful. He might not pick your calls but never give up on him. Until he comes to himself your physical presence might not be useful.

What if he is a tree climber? You may need to initiate his return by doing what others might never have expected you to do.

3) **PHYSICAL WAYS WE SHOULD APPLY TO RESTORE A BACKSLIDER**

1. Know that you cannot restore a backslider as it takes the Holy Spirit. So pray for them. Luke 22:31-32.
2. Show empathy and give him a sense of belonging. Luke 15: 20-24,
3. Visit them and be real in your visitation. Matt 9:11; Luke 5:30, Luke 10:38-42.
4. See to their need if they have needs.
5. Demonstrate true love. **Luke 15:22-23**
6. Do not engage in condemnation by reminding him of his sin. You do this when you leave him with the filthy clothes. You bring the best clothes for him. The son especially because he has a mind of

his own might be living a guilty life. Do not let him live a guilty life.

John 8:10-11

7. The leaders will need to understand the balancing act as some brethren will complain about the process of restoration. Love should be the bottom line. **Luke 15: 28.**
8. Finally, as you care for the backslider do not forget the faithful ones. Luke 15:29-32.
9. Give him a sign of identity. Luke 15:22
10. Celebrate and make enough noise so that everyone will know that he is back and as such he will not be ostracized or called names outside. This is total restoration. Not every member of the church will understand this process. It is the function of the elders to take control of the situation.

CONCLUSION: The process of restoring a backslider is a win-win-win situation. You win, the backslider wins and heaven wins. It is a difficult job, but it is also very rewarding. It is rewarding to the restorer and to the restored. It takes a lot of efforts and time. The restorer must be very focused because you are engaged in a spiritual battle which one must approach with good tactics. The bottom line of all the restorer is doing must be done with absolute love and not self gain. If you approach the business of restoration with a selfish motive, you are most like going to get tired and frustrated.