

SYMPTOMS OF BACKSLIDING

MATTHEW CHAPTER 26

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Definition of Backsliding

A process by which one who has converted to Christ “reverts” to their pre-conversion habits



Symptoms-- A Characteristic that Indicates the Existence of Something Else

Symptoms

Increased Thirst/Urination

Chest Pain/Substernal

Painful, Swollen, Hot Foot

Rash Between Toes

May Indicate

Diabetes

Heart Attack

Gout

Athletes Foot

Symptoms of Backsliding

#1 **Pride**

Matthew 26:31 - 35 (NKJV) Then Jesus said to them,
“All of you will be made to stumble because of Me
this night, for it is written:

‘ I will strike the Shepherd

And the sheep of the flock will be
scattered.’

Matthew 26:31 - 35 (continued)

‘But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.’ Peter answered and said to Him, “ **Even if all are made to stumble because of you I will never be made to stumble.**” Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” ***Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And so said all the disciples.***

That is Pride, Pure and Simple

- Pride says, “I would never do that!”
- Pride says, “I’m better than they are!”
- Pride says, “I’m too good for that!”

Points to Remember

- Our confidence in fighting temptation must be in God and not in yourself Ephesians 6:10
- In 2 Chronicles 32:8, King Hezekiah told the children of Israel that the “arm of flesh” will fail you but “with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles.”
- Satan likes to score points on what you believe is your strength (He challenged Peter’s proclamation, the same night!)
- 1 Corinthians 10:12, ***“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”***

Symptoms of Backsliding

2 Getting too Comfortable

Matthew 26:40-46 (NKJV) “Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, **“What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.”**

Matthew 26:40-46 (continued)

Again, a second time, He went and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done. “And He came **and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.**

Matthew 26:40-46 (continued)

So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, ***“Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See My betrayer is at hand.”***

Getting Too Comfortable

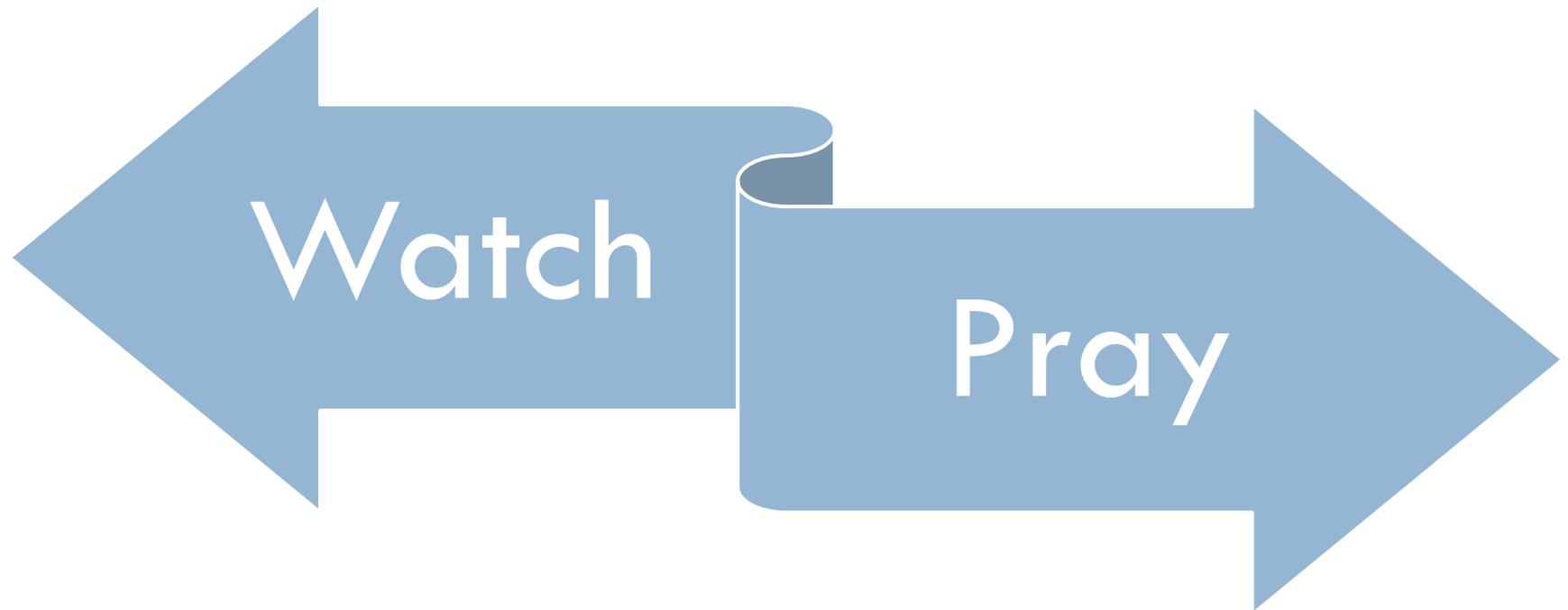
- They were, nonchalant; “resting” when they should have been alert. (1 Peter 5:8, a more mature Peter writes differently) “Vigilant”
- As Christians, what happens many times is we get too comfortable and quit praying for ourselves, our families, our friends, and our circumstances

Then Something Tragic Happens!

We wake up but we are not focused
spiritually and we do what the disciples
did in verse 56, **WE RUN!**

(Self Preservation!)

Jesus says, in Matthew 26:41 we should always:



Symptoms of Backsliding

3 Reverting to the Flesh

Matthew 26:51 (NKJV) “And suddenly , one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.”

John 18:10 identifies the assailant as Peter.

One of the Key Ways We Can Tell if We Are Backsliding

- We try to solve our problems “in the flesh” not allowing God to intervene
- We revert to the ways we have always done things
 - Bring our temper to the situation
 - Bring our impatience to the situation
 - Bring our morals to the situation
- Peter was not urged or compelled by God to **Act.**
He acted on **his own accord!**

Symptoms of Backsliding

4 **Following at a Distance**

Matthew 26:58 (NKJV) But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.

Symptoms of Backsliding

- When we start *distancing ourselves* from *God*
- When we don't spend as much *time* in *prayer*
- When we don't spend as much *time* in *Bible Study*
- When we don't spend as much *time* in *worship*
- When we don't spend as much *time* in *ministries (Helping Others)*

Symptoms of Backsliding

- When we don't spend as much **time** with God's people but with "**others**"
- Verse 58 says Peter sat with the servants to "see the end"
- Now Peter is trying to "**blend in**" or "**fit in**" where he didn't "**fit**"

Questions to Ponder

***Have you influenced the world of sin
or has the world of sin influenced
you?***

Are you in it, but not of it?

Do you try to “blend in”?

Symptoms of Backsliding

5 Cursing and Swearing

Matthew 26:74 (NKJV) ***Then he began to curse and swear, saying, “I do not know the Man!”***

Swearing - means calling on God to affirm your statement.

“God will back up my words”

Remember, this was the man who said in verse 33 of the same chapter, *“I will never desert you”*

James 3:9-10

“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness.

Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters this should not be.”

Remember These Symptoms of Backsliding

- Pride
- Getting too Comfortable in the World
- Reverting to the Flesh
- Following at a Distance
- Cursing and Swearing

The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel	Acts 15:7
Believe the Gospel	Acts 15:7
Repent of Sins	Acts 17:30
Confess Christ	Acts 8:37
Be Baptized	Acts 8:38