

1 Youth Ministry

Grades 7-12

July 22, 2023 Backsliding Christians

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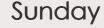
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Foster Care Teens Personal Care Items

We are always collecting "Personal Care Items" for teens in foster care throughout the year. Items for both male and female teens are being collected in the bin just outside our youth room. These items will be sorted into personal bags and given to DCS to be distributed to teens who may not even have their own tooth brush or comb.

This Week's Bible Verse

Ephesians 2:8-9





Backsliding Christians

Last Sunday we discussed Christians "backsliding". We said that "backsliding" is basically when a saved Christian falls back into sinful activities and strays from a Godly path.

Many Christians, Modern Day Pharisees, and even some Churches believe that a saved Christian who backslides into sin is no longer saved. Most also believe there are things one can do (works) to become saved again.

We wondered where these beliefs come from and found that many of them come from various Old Testament scripture, including **Jeremiah 8:5**.

In the Old Testament times, under The Law, man had to earn salvation by following the 613 rules in God's Law or The Law of Moses. Failing to follow even just one rule was failing to follow God's Law and therefore, no salvation for you. That's some serious backsliding.

Fortunately, once a year, on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) following an elaborate ceremony, confession, sacrifice, etc. you could be forgiven and



⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Titus 2:11-12

11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,

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start over and try again the following year (and of course fail again).

We watched a <u>hilarious video</u> describing what the salvation process must have been like at that time.

We said that the biggest problem with this method of salvation is that since it is by our own works to attain, it is also by our own works that we can "backslide" and lose it all and we all know how that ends up.

Fortunately, now there is a much better way.

In the New Testament, under the New Covenant, God sent His own Son, Jesus, to be the perfect, sinless, sacrifice to pay for all our sin, past, present, and future, once and for all, for everyone.

As it tells us in **John 3:16** and in **Romans 10:9**, all we need to do is **believe it to be true.** (Salvation Prayer)

We said that it is not just saying the Salvation Prayer that brings us salvation but by truly believing what is said in the prayer. Jesus is the Son of God who died for our sins and rose again for our salvation.

As it says in **Ephesians 2:8-9**, we are saved by grace through faith and not by our works.

Just like God's unconditional love for us, since there is nothing we did to "earn" it, there is nothing we can do to lose it. If you think about it, it really wouldn't be much of a salvation if we could just lose it by doing something stupid.

Yes, our Earthly body/flesh will sometimes still sin but our body is just a container for our spirit while here on Earth. Our spirit has been made new in Christ and the Holy Spirit now lives in us to always help guide us in the right direction. Also, it is **God's Grace** that actually teaches us to say no to sin and ungodliness (**Titus 2:11-12**).

We said that while we no longer have to follow 613 rules or even stop sinning in order to be saved, God clearly still does not want us to sin. Why not?

God's Law was given to us not only to tell us how to be righteous (and to show that we can't do it), it also shows us how to have a good life. So, while following The Law will not save us, it's still a good goal to help us have a better life.

Since Jesus summed up all 613 rules into just two



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