

# HOW TO AVOID SLIDING BACK

## TEXT: PSALM 26

### Introduction:

1. There is a very important statement found in Psalm 26:1 – “I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.”
2. I hope you are the type of Christian who does not want to “slide.”
3. There are many warnings in the Bible about backsliding.
4. Jeremiah 3:12 says, “Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.”
5. The prophets, especially the prophets Jeremiah and Hosea refer frequently to the backslidden condition of Israel.
6. Hosea 11:7 says, “And my people are bent to backsliding from me.”
7. Here in Psalm 26, David says, “I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.”

### **I. TRUST IN THE LORD (26:1).**

1. Spurgeon said, “Faith is the root and sap of integrity. He who leans upon the Lord is sure to walk in righteousness” (*Treasury of David*).
2. David begins Psalm 26 by saying, “I have walked in mine integrity” (26:1), and says the same thing again in verse 11.
3. Integrity refers to Christian character, moral rectitude, and uprightness of purpose.
4. David could sincerely say this because he trusted in the LORD.

5. Trusting in the Lord is one of the great themes in the Bible, and one of the great themes in the book of Psalms – David says in verse 1, “I have trusted also in the LORD.”
6. Psalm 2:12 says, “Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”
7. Psalm 4:5 says, “Put your trust in the LORD.”
8. Psalm 5:11 says, “But let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice.”
9. Psalm 7:1 says, “O LORD my God, in Thee do I put my trust.”
10. Recently I have been going through the Psalms tracing this great theme – “Trust in the LORD.”
11. The Scofield Study Bible says, “Trust is the characteristic O.T. word for the N.T. ‘faith,’ ‘believe.’ It occurs 152 times in the O.T., and is the rendering of Hebrew words signifying to take refuge (e.g. [Ruth 2:12](#) ‘to lean on’ (e.g.) [Psalms 56:3](#) ‘to roll on’ (e.g.) [Psalms 22:8](#) ‘to stay upon’ (e.g.) [Job 35:14](#)” (p. 600).
12. In Psalm 26:1 and 2, David says to God, “Judge me, O LORD...Examine me...and prove me.” David is saying that he has trusted the LORD without wavering.
13. Can we pray like that? If we can, we “shall not slide” (26:1).

## II. AVOID EVIL DOERS (26:4, 5, 9, 10).

1. In the days following the 9/11 attack on the WTC, the worldly crowd ridiculed President Bush for referring to the terrorists as “evil doers.” The president was laughed to scorn by wicked men because he dared to use a Biblical term (26:5).
2. Lost sinners scoff at this term. In fact, they dislike many Biblical words – evil, wicked, sin, judgment, hell – to mention just a few.
3. But Bible-believing Christians understand what evil is. And we know who the evil doers are. Spurgeon said, “All those who live for this life only are vain, chaffy, frothy men, quite unworthy of a Christian’s friendship.”
4. In his great book, *Treasury of David*, Spurgeon quotes an expositor named David Dickson, who says the believer must keep himself “from the contagion of the evil counsel, sinful causes, and example of the wicked.”
5. Over and over again, the Word of God commands us to separate from evil doers (cf. Psalm 1:1).
6. We saw this past Sunday how King Jehoshaphat was wrong not to separate from wicked men like King Ahab, and Jehoshaphat’s disobedience adversely affected his children, grandchildren, etc.
7. Spurgeon said, “Since I know that hypocritical piety is double iniquity, I will cease all acquaintance with pretenders. If I must need walk the same street, I will not enter the same door and spend my time in their society. The congregation of the hypocrites is not one with which we should cultivate

communion; their ultimate rendezvous will be the lowest pit of hell, let us drop their acquaintance now! for we shall not desire it soon. They hang their beads around their necks and carry the devil in their hearts. This clause is in the future tense, to indicate that the writer felt no desire to begin an acquaintance with the characters whom up till then he had shunned. We must maintain the separated path with more and more circumspection as we see the great redemption day approaching. Those who would be transfigured with Jesus, must not be disfigured by conformity to the world” (*Treasury of David*).

8. We need more preaching like that today. We need more preaching from II Corinthians 6:17, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”
9. We are not only to be separated from sin; we are to be separated unto God. The apostle Paul begins his epistle to the Romans with these words, “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1).

### **III. BE IN CHURCH OFTEN (26:8, 11, 12; cf. 27:4-6).**

1. You can tell a lot about a person by what he hates (26:5), and by what he loves (26:8).
2. Christians ought to hate bars, and love church; hate worldly literature and love the Bible; hate rock music and love hymns.
3. But there are certain Christians who have not taken this clear cut position. They cannot in good conscience say, “My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD” (26:12).

### **CONCLUSION:**

W Graham Scroggie, in his *A Guide to the Psalms*, tells this interesting story:

After the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1685 (legislation that had protected the rights of French Protestants for nearly a century), by Louis XIV, the Protestant ministers were expelled from France, but the people were forbidden to leave, and all the highways and byways were jealously watched to prevent them. Fines, imprisonment, tortures, were then employed to make them renounce their religion, and their children were taken from them to be brought up in the Roman Catholic faith. Despair drove the Protestants to attempt every means of escape. They took refuge among the mountains and woods; hiding by day and fleeing by night to reach the frontier. The most industrious and intelligent of her population left France and inflicted on her a loss from which she has not yet recovered. The stories of some of these refugees are of the most thrilling kind. When they reached a friendly land

they thanked God with ecstasy for the safety and freedom their own country denied them. Pineton of Chambrun, one of these exiles, tells that when he and his companions came in sight of Geneva they sang with tears of joy this Psalm, from verse 8 to the close, every word of which seems made for such a case.

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