

MARANATHA BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

10 April 2016

"Present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28)

Address: 63 Cranwell Road, Singapore 509851

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Sunday School: 9.45 am

Sunday English / Chinese Worship Service: 10.45 am Sunday Chinese Worship Service: 7 pm

Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8.00 pm

Spiritual Signs of a Backsliding Christian

Proverbs 14:14, *'The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.'*

Introduction

Many Christians today are oblivious to the Lord's will and ignorant of His word and that makes us vulnerable to diabolical attacks and falling away from Him. Consider the following signs of a backsliding Christian.

1) Acceptance of Personal and Theological Error and Sin

One sign is that the backsliding Christian will be more ready to accept unbiblical worldviews and practices like dancing, gambling, smoking, homosexuality, drinking alcohol, worldly music, theistic evolution, moral compromise in behaviour and thoughts and other unedifying actions like being covetous, angry, ungrateful or malicious in nature.

2) Profound Ignorance of the Fear of God and Laziness in the Study of Word and Prayer

One of the sure marks of a person who is far away from God is His ignorance or indifference to seek out the will of God in his or her life. He or she tends to do things his or her way. That makes the person susceptible to wrong directions and to the wiles of the evil one and slowly he or she loses direction and may fall away even further from the Lord.

The person will also lose his reverence and fear of the Lord and will be self-confident, proud and even arrogant and generally he or she lacks interest in the reading of the word of God and shows no desire to pray or to come for Sabbath worship, fellowship meetings or the church prayer meeting. The word of God will keep us from sin and falling away or sin will keep us from reading and obeying the word.

3) No Respect for the 10 Commandments

One of the sure signs of a backsliding person is his or her disregard for the moral laws of God. A fallen person will be rebellious and disobedient to the instructions of God and he or she will neglect or not pay attention nor obey the laws of God. Idolatry or pride sets in slowly and he or she is distracted from God. So when it comes to tempting situations of breaking the law like, smoking lying, or theft or gambling, he or she is prone to do it as he or she does not have a high regard for God's laws.

4) Wandering Thoughts during Worship and the Grieving of the Holy Spirit

One area of healthy Christian living is regular Sabbath worship and a person who is not close to God will not enjoy sacred worship and may even find it insipid and boring. The singing of hymns, prayer and the hearing of the word will not mean much to him or her and he or she may even complain or murmur about the time of the service : the length or content of the sermon, the choice of hymns, the chairman leading or the pianist or organist.

5) A Sad Lack of Understanding and Appreciation of Spiritual Vigilance and Faith

A backsliding person will often be in spiritual slumber or lethargy and will be weak in spiritual warfare and hence more vulnerable to pitfalls and temptations. For example, he or she will not be alert to the seductions of the world and may fall easily into sin that will lead him or her into deeper sinful entanglement which may cause him or her to face the possible consequences later.

6) No Respect for Spiritual Order and Authority in the Family and the Church

The person who is far away from God will also not likely respect God or human authority like our parents or the teacher or the officer in charge of us or their superior and he will often quarrel with he or her or disregard his or her instructions. He needs to learn to honour God first before He will honour men.

7. A Lowly View of Biblical Preaching and the Teaching of the Word of God

He or she will generally have no regard for the declaration of the inspired word as he or she is enamoured with many other worldly things and is distracted by the world rather than focused on the word. He will not dutifully do his or her Quiet Time nor be interested in reading Christian books. He or she will prefer handphone games, Youtube, worldly websites, magazines and computer games of this life along with his or her work or studies rather than the everlasting word of truth.

8. Forgetfulness of God's Faithfulness and Goodness in Times Past

He or she will be prone to neglecting or forgetting God's blessings and past goodness shown to him or her. Gratitude is a mark of a Spirit filled Christian (1 Thessalonians 5:18) and the opposite is also true. He or she will be unmindful and ungrateful of what the Lord had done for him or her in the past as he or she is often concerned only for the present.

9. No Desire or Burden for Souls nor to Serve with our Talents nor to Honour or Glorify God

There is a general reluctance for a backsliding person to give of himself or herself to serve God in any capacity. There is no motivation to do so as he is not concerned about pleasing

God and receiving eternal rewards. He is mainly concerned about himself and his own pleasures or physical welfare and generally not keen on spiritual things of eternal value.

Conclusion

Psalm 139:23-24 says, *'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'*

We need to examine ourselves and to see if we are backsliding and drifting away from God possibly without us knowing it. I once read this in a poster in a Christian book room, *Does God seem Far Away? Guess who moved?* God is waiting for us to return to Him and to confess and repent of our sins and he will forgive us and restore us again. Something to seriously pray and think about. We conclude with this good news from Hosea 14:4 which says, *'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.'*

Jack Sin

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Reviving Evangel (Tangkak) BP Church, Malaysia

'Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.' Acts 9:31



Evangel (Tangkak) BP Church at their newly rented premises.

On 4 April 2016, after our own service, Beverly Ye, Paul Kong, Dn Ng Thiam Koon (driver) and I made our way to minister the word on the *Elements of a Biblical Revival* (Ezekiel 37) at Tangkak BP Church, traveling about 400 km two ways and coming back before midnight.

Dedication of the Tangkak BP Church
newly purchased shophouse in 2002 with many visitor and friends



Tangkak BP Church was incepted in 1999 as a reformed church with about 10-12 people including brother Bill, Yap, Chua, Keng, Foo and Rev Sim Peng Sim to reach out with the gospel to the residents in the Tangkak Muar area. It was a English Service initially and later became bilingual with Pr Yap Kim Chuan and Rev Kim Kah Teck interpreting. Maranatha BP Church supported this mission for about 4 years before passing it on to Rev Peter Chua of Sharon BP Church (and supported by Dr and Mrs Tan Yew Ghee) and now it is under the able leadership of Elder Dr Lim Yew Cheng of Evangel BP Church, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and his team since January 2016. Preacher Yap Kim Chuan who was called of the Lord and has served as the preacher for more than a decade and is now taking a sabbatical and studying at the Emmanuel Reformed Bible Lectures for one year. It is a bilingual service of about 20-30 people now and has its Sunday school class taught by Hazel and a mid-week prayer meeting. Brother Lim and Dn Chua serve in the protem committee led by Elder Dr Lim Yew Cheng and the church has its own shop house purchased in 2000. We used to hold Bible seminars and gospel rallies there in the early days to the edifying and the saving of souls.

The church service is now held at a more central shop house where it is more accessible to others and thank God for about 30 who came last Sunday including the brethren from Evangel BP Church, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia who come down every week in their church van to support the ministry.

There are about 35,000 people in the vicinity of Tangkak (famous for its bak ku teh) and there is a rich harvest field here for souls to be saved as the Lord wills. Thank God that one young man accepted Christ last month and last Sunday a restaurant owner came for the first time and heard the gospel and Elder Dr Lim Yew Cheng followed up on him. Pray for his salvation and his family. There is a need for more effectual outreach, discipleship and visitation of new friends and much fervent prayers and committed members too.

Pray for the revival of Evangel (Tangkak) BP Church that many souls will be saved.



Do uphold this gospel mission station in prayer that it will be a vibrant and glowing reformed witness for the Lord and let us pray and support them as much as we can in our mission trips. The Lord is coming very soon.

Jack Sin

Theme for the Quarter :

Developing our Biblical Understanding of Christian Issues

English Worship Service

Rev Dr Jack Sin

speaks on

Biblical Understanding of the Concerns of the Local Church

(Scripture Text : Acts 2:42-47; Responsive Reading : 1 Corinthians 16:1-24)

[*End of MM*]