

sinner. Rich pastures in the plain of Sodom covered Lot by and by with shame. Pleasures drawn from poisoned springs are bitter and deadly. Even in the event of recovery from backsliding, the couch is wet with tears by reason of groaning. Loss, total and eternal, to the soul, is the consequence of sin, when unforgiven and unforsaken; yet even if recovering grace displays its power, those rewards and heights of heaven are never reached in all the fulness enjoyed by the ever faithful, the always true.

Though the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own way, we dare not hide the gracious words to be found in God's book pointing to recovery. Let none be driven to despair though they have gone astray. How tenderly God pleads—return, O backsliding Israel. What have you found in God?—has He been a wilderness? What has the world proved to you?—darkened are its brightest scenes, withered are its fairest flowers, blighted are its sweetest fruits. Sinner, conscious of departing from the truth, losing sight of Jesus, amid fancies, speculations, and questions of a subsidiary nature, return to the slighted cross, go back to a neglected Saviour. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Wandering disciple, departing from the fellowship of God's people, let it not be said of you, they went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be manifest that they were not all of us. Stand by your colours, say, I am a companion of them that fear God. Backsliding professor, departing from correct practises in the duties of life, in conformity to the world and indulgence in pleasure, take heed. Cast aside your sins, crucify every bosom lust. Apply for healing to Jesus. As at first you ventured on the Redeemer for salvation, so take him now. Take with you words and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips. Then shall His gracious answer be, I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

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