



1

Jer 3:20-22, 8:5 Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel," says the Lord.²¹ A voice was heard on the desolate heights, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel. For they have perverted their way; they have forgotten the Lord their God.²² "Return, you backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." ... Why has this people slidden back, Jerusalem, in a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast to deceit, they refuse to return.

2



3

“The popular phrase for this is deconstruction. The biblical phrase is falling away. By all the measurements that I have for defining a Christian, I am not a Christian.

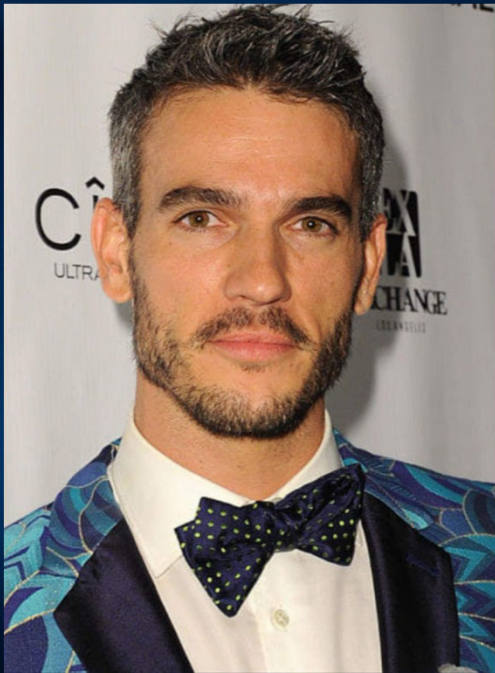
4

... I've lived in repentance for the past several years repenting of my self-righteousness, my fear-based approach to life, the teaching of my books, my views of women in the church, and my approach to parenting to name a few, but, I specifically want to add to this list now. To the LGBTQ+ community, I want to say that I am sorry for the views that I taught in my books and as a pastor regarding sexuality. I regret standing against marriage equality, for not affirming you and your place in the church, and for any ways that my writing and speaking contributed to a culture of exclusion and bigotry. I hope you can forgive me.

5

I am learning that no group has the market cornered on grace ... In a way it's almost easier for me to contemplate throwing out all of Christianity than it is to keeping Christianity and adapting it in these different ways."

6



Marty Sampson, songwriter and singer for Hillsong United:

"I'm genuinely losing my faith ... and it doesn't bother me ... like, what bothers me now is nothing ... I am so happy now, so at peace with the world ... It's crazy. ... How many miracles happen? Not many. No one talks about it. Why is the Bible full of contradictions? No one talks about it.

7



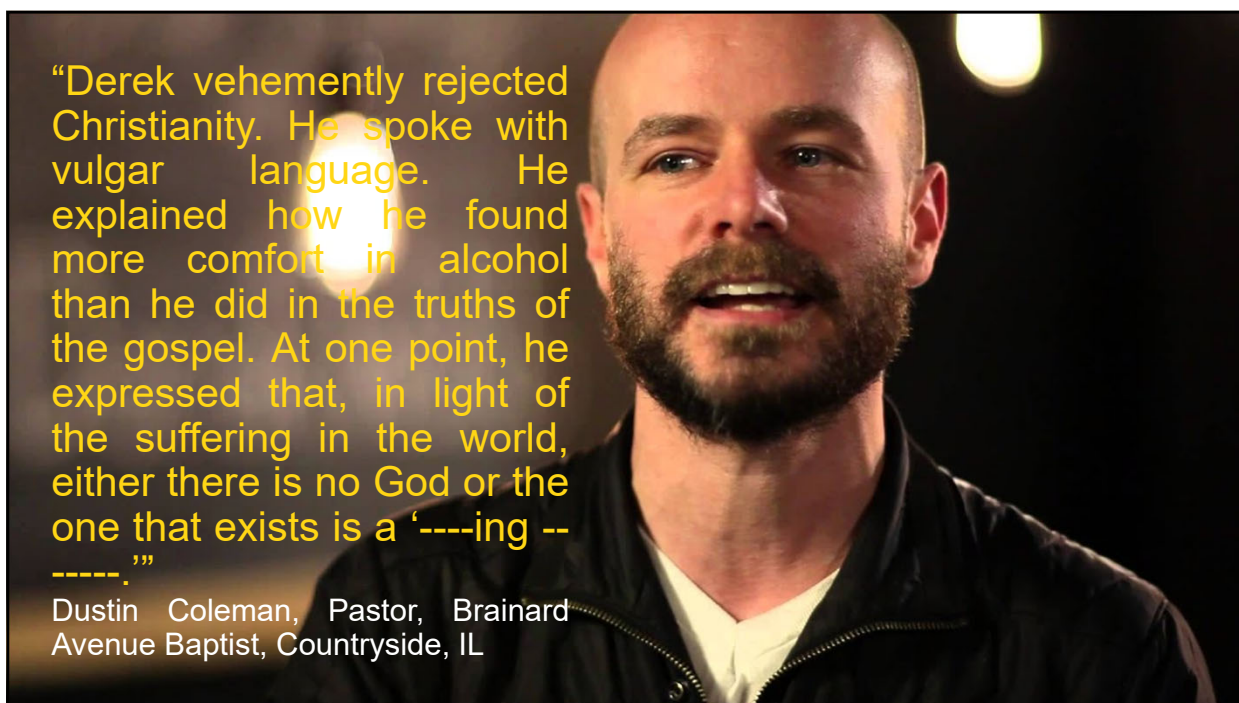
How can God be love yet send four billion people to a place, all coz they don't believe? No one talks about it. ... I am not in anymore. I want genuine truth. ... Science keeps piercing the truth of every religion. Lots of things help people change their lives, not just one version of God. Got so much more to say, but for me, I'm keeping it real."

8



Derek Webb, Christian singer/songwriter (Caedmon's Call)

9



"Derek vehemently rejected Christianity. He spoke with vulgar language. He explained how he found more comfort in alcohol than he did in the truths of the gospel. At one point, he expressed that, in light of the suffering in the world, either there is no God or the one that exists is a '----ing -----.'"

Dustin Coleman, Pastor, Brainard Avenue Baptist, Countryside, IL

10

Oddly/sadly, believers falling away is common to the history of God's people.

11



12

2 Tim 4:10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica ...

2 Tim 4:4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

Heb 10:38 Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.

13



14

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

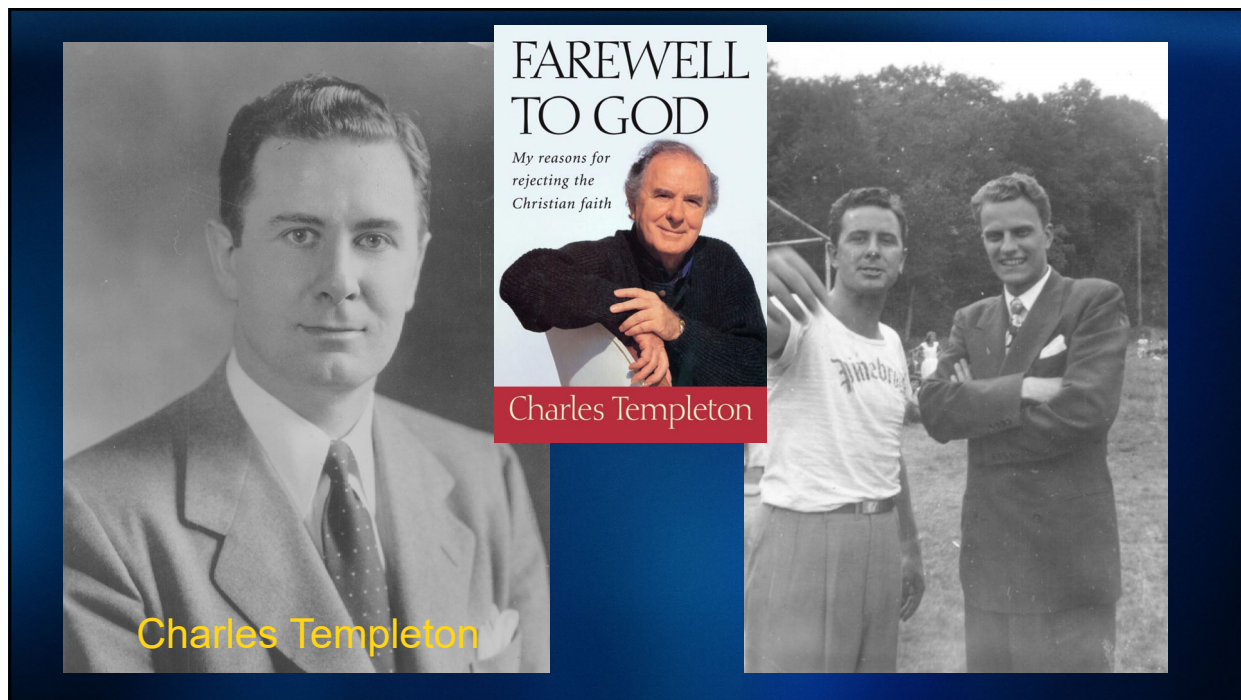
(penned the words at age 22 in the year 1757)

15

"Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love. Take my heart, O take and seal it Seal it for thy courts above."

"Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then."

16



17

Is backsliding the same as
apostasy?

18

Backslider: one who is a genuine believer/follower, but for some reason, becomes disobedient and estranged from God and experiences broken fellowship with God

Apostate: one who was never “truly” saved but had a “religious” experience and who eventually reveals their true nature and recants their faith

19

The backslider

20



21

2 Pet 2:7-8 and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed [vexed, KJV] by the filthy conduct of the wicked⁸(for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented [vexed, KJV] his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)

22

Rev 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place

1 Cor 5:1-5 ⁵deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Jn 5:16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.

23

The apostate

24

They were never saved in the first place –
no matter how sincere they may appear

25

Acts 8:20-24 But Peter said to him, “Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! ²¹ You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. ²² Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.” ²⁴ Then Simon answered and said, “Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me.”

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30

They get close to salvation, but stop short of saving faith: Heb 6:4-6, 10:26-31

31

1 Jn 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

32

Js 2:19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble!

Mt 7:22-23 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

33

**How does someone become
a backslider?**

34

Distractions – “Lost sheep” (Lk 15:3-7)
Carelessness – “Lost coin” (Lk 15:8-10)
Willful sin – “Prodigal son” (Lk 15:11-32)

35

**What does a backslider
look like?**

36

- Their priorities honor the world more than God
- Prayer, Bible study, & worship are no longer a priority to them
- Their conscience and the Holy Spirit convict you
- They no longer produce spiritual fruit
- They no longer have inner joy
- They no longer experience spiritual victory

37

What is the cost of
backsliding?

38

Heb 10:38 Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.

2 Chron 7:19-20 But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, ²⁰then I will uproot them from My land which I have given them; and this house which I have sanctified for My name I will cast out of My sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

39

Prov 1:24-31 Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, because you disdained all my counsel, and would have none of my rebuke, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, when your terror comes like a storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you. They they will call on me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord, they would have none of my counsel and despised my every rebuke.

40

What is the road back?

41

Is 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

Zech 1:3-4 Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Return to Me," says the Lord of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the Lord of hosts.

42

Rev 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place

Remember

Repent

Repeat

43



44

“Sir, the ‘streams of mercy’ are still flowing.”