

# Christians Departing From The Faith

April 11, 2021

## Different Variations of Falling Away

- ***Rejection of Christianity***
- ***Rejection of Sound Doctrine for False Doctrine***
  - *Narcissistic, cultish and gnostic self-promotion*
  - *Amalgamation of Biblical principles with worldly wisdom, to build unholy alliances*
- ***Return to liturgical rituals, ceremonies, and tradition in response to contemporary error and disillusionment***
- ***Leaders and Christians leading double lives***

## Not “If” But “When”

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 NASB20

1 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit, or a message, or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

3 No one is to deceive you in any way! For it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.

- apostasy (*apostasía*) *a falling away, defection from the true religion, to forsake, apostasy*

1 Timothy 4:1-2 ESV

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,

2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared.

## The Circumstances Surrounding The Falling Away

Mark 4:14-20 ESV

14 The sower sows the word.

15 And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.

16 And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy.

17 And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

18 And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word,

19 but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

20 But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

## 1. Tribulation and Persecution

*Psalm 73:2-5 ESV*

2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped.

3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek.

5 They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.

*Psalm 73:12-14 ESV*

12 Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.

13 All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.

14 For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning.

*Luke 22:54-62 ESV*

54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him."

57 But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him."

58 And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not."

59 And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean."

60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."

62 And he went out and wept bitterly.

## 2. Cares of the World, Deceitfulness of Riches, Desires for Other Things

*2 Timothy 4:9-10 ESV*

9 Do your best to come to me soon.

10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.

*Philippians 3:16-19 ESV*

*16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.*

*17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.*

*18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.*

*19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.*

## **Root Causes of Falling Away**

### **Lack of Self-Denial & Surrender**

Luke 9:23-24 ESV

23 And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

Genesis 3:4-5 ESV

4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.

5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Matthew 10:37-39 ESV

37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

### **Spiritual Neglect**

Hebrews 2:1-3 ESV

1 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

2 For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution,

3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

Revelation 2:4-5 ESV

4 But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

## Lack of Holy Fellowship

1 Corinthians 5:6-13 ESV

6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

7 Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

8 Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people--

10 not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler--not even to eat with such a one.

12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?

13 God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

Hebrews 3:12-14 ESV

12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.