

Four Steps to Apostasy

Introduction

2 Timothy 4:1-4

1. Many feel that it is impossible to fall from grace. "Once Saved, Always Saved."
2. Many church members have this mind set. (Theory/Practice)
 - A. One can and will fall if not on guard.
3. APOSTASY: "A falling away"; "A defection" Used to describe a falling away from the faith and a secession from the church, a disowning of the name of Christ!

Position must Be Reached Before a Fall

1. We become God's children through faith.
 - A. The Bible is our only source of faith.
Romans 10:17

Romans 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

2. To please God - we must walk by faith
Hebrews 11:6
3. Those walking by this faith remain free from the guilt of sin. Those who don't fall from God's grace.

There Are Four Steps to Apostasy:

1. **Step One: WRONG ATTITUDE:** This is the beginning place of apostasy.

A. A compromising attitude toward the preaching of the gospel will lead to unfaithfulness.

“Compromise is simply changing the question to fit the answer.” (Merrit Malloy)

2 Thessalonians 2:10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they **did not receive the love of the truth**, that they might be saved.

B. Can't just preach the Bible without convicting men of sin.

Proverbs 23:23 Buy the truth, and **do not sell it**, also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

C. Some don't want negative preaching “telling one what he must do.” They want a positive, loving approach only. To do this would be a failure to preach the “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

D. Many today will not listen to or endure sound doctrine. They become angry at it because it offends them!

2. Step Two: **FALSE TEACHERS**: This quickly follows step one.

- A. When the preaching of the truth angers church members they often run the gospel preacher off and bring in one who will “tickle” their ears.

Isaiah 30:10 Who say to the seers, "Do not see," And to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits.

- B. In the days of the prophets, those claiming to be children of God heaped to themselves false teachers. False teachers have always been in demand.

Jeremiah 5:31 The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?

The Bible shows us very clearly the marks of a false prophet. Most of these same signs are evident among false teachers today:

Through signs and wonders they lead astray after false gods (Deut 13:1-4)
 Their prophecies don't come to pass (Deut 18:20-22)
They contradict God's Word (Isaiah 8:20)
They bear bad fruit (Matthew 7:18-20);
All men speak well of them (Luke 6:26)
 They deny that Jesus has come once and for all in the flesh (1 John 4:3)

- C. Many congregations have been led into apostasy because the preachers tried to please the people instead of save the people. **THERE IS A DIFFERENCE!**
Titus 1:10-11

Matthew 7:15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

3. Step Three: **TURN FROM THE TRUTH:**

- A. When the understanding and the heart have no desire for the truth, they are not going to listen to it.**

John 8:32 "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

1 Peter 1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

- 1) When this happens, the weak, indifferent Christian, will try to cast the blame for their falling away on the preacher or other faithful member.**

"People who are out to find fault seldom find anything else." (George Whitefield)

Wayne Dyer ---

All blame is a waste of time. No matter how much fault you find with another, and regardless of how much you blame him, it will not change you. The only thing blame does is to keep the focus off you when you are looking for external reasons to explain your unhappiness or frustration. You may succeed in making another feel guilty of something by blaming him, but you won't succeed in changing whatever it is about you that is making you unhappy.

- B. We are responsible for our own actions. To turn from truth is turn away from God's power to save us from sin!**

Hebrews 10:26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

4. Step Four: **TURN TO FABLES:**

The acceptance of every false doctrine - wanting to believe what they want to believe. Not wanting to see it the Bible way, but rather their way.

- A. It boils down to the fact that men do not find the truth agreeable to them. As a result, they will often accept the most childish beliefs imaginable for doctrines.**

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- B. A waste of soul! Profitless fables taken in exchange for soul-saving truth!**

John 12:48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him-- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

“My greatest thought is my accountability to God.” (Daniel Webster)

Conclusion

The End Result Is Complete Apostasy:

- 1. The Bible warns in numerous places of the difficulty of restoring those who fall away.**

2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, **being led away with the error of the wicked.**

- 2. Let us welcome and remain faithful to God and His Word!**
1 Thessalonians 2:13

