



APOSTASY IN THE CHURCH

Apostasy in the Church

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-8

“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people. ⁶ They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, ⁷ always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these teachers oppose the truth. They are men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected.”



APOSTASY IN THE CHURCH

- We are in a spiritual battle fighting against principalities, powers and spiritual wickedness
- The Church has not recognized that the god of this world, Satan, is using highly sophisticated spiritual weaponry and he is using it to fight the Church from outside and also from within
- Today's Church needs to get back to what the early Church did well (Acts 2):
 1. Continuing steadfastly in sound doctrine
 2. Fellowshiping together
 3. Unity – they had all things in common
 4. Praising God
 5. Sharing the Gospel – God added to the Church daily



CONDITION OF TODAY'S CHURCH VERSUS EARLY CHURCH

Today's Church

- Not transforming lives
- Failing to change the world
- Treading water; on life support
- Conforming to the world not to Christ
- Empty, lifeless, ritualistic practice; no power
- Afraid of Holy Spirit; denying His power

Early Church

- Lives are transformed
- Amazed the nations
- Convicted, convinced and converted lives
- Ushered in a new era
- Blaze of God's power and glory with authority
- Full of the Holy Spirit

Matthew 5:13: ¹³ "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot."



PERILOUS TIMES WILL COME: LAST DAYS

- Godlessness
- Change of what is accepted in society: what once was the norm is now on the fringe: the Church. What once was on the fringe is now the norm: godless, sinful, prideful society (even in the Church)
- Perilous times have been in the world since Adam and Eve fell. The difference is that in the last days this is referring to the condition within the Church and the falling away from God and ultimately holiness (Romans chapter 1)
- When the Church falls away from holiness and does not endure sound doctrine then these are perilous times indeed (ex. If you preach on holiness or Hell in Church today people get upset with you)



PROBLEM IS IN THE CHURCH

Not concerned about condition of man's soul. Focused on money, congregation
Size and accommodation!

Spirit of Accommodation

- Accommodating sin
- Not focused on holiness or doctrine
- Not preaching that change and transformation is necessary

Spirit of Assimilation

- Identical to the world
- Church has lost its salt and savor

Spirit of Association

- Blinded by association with evil

We want to have the Spirit of Assignment. We need to understand the purpose that God has for our lives. We need to come out from the world!



THE FALLING AWAY

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 says:

“Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, ² not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us—whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter—asserting that the day of the Lord has already come. ³ Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.”

- Day of the Lord...Day of Christ. Is it the final judgment of God or is it Christ’s revealing at the Second Coming?
- Two things must take place prior to Christ’s return:
 - a. A great apostasy will take place. Many who once knew the Gospel will fall away from the faith. (Believers are growing cold in their love for God)
 - b. The Antichrist will be revealed
- Mystery of Iniquity (verse 7). Mysterious form of sin will usher in Antichrist.
- Spirit of iniquity will fall upon lost humanity gripping people’s hearts so powerfully that the Antichrist will rise to power
- Subtle demonic influence so powerful it may deceive even the very elect



WHAT IS THE MYSTERY?

- Even now, the mystery is at its full seductive power
- It is preparing the masses to receive the Man of Sin
- Satan is seducing the masses into depths of lawlessness. Greek word in verse 7 for iniquity is lawlessness!
- Lawlessness is people acting without law or restraint
- This is not just a rebellion against the rule of man or civil authority, but against the God of the universe! It is the rejection of Christ!
- America is a good example of what sinking into lawlessness means.
 - 1962 America removes prayer from schools
 - 1973 America allows the killing of babies
 - 2012 America changes the definition of marriage; allows same-sex unions
- According to the Barna Research Group, 55% of “Christians” do not believe that Hell exists. We have no more moral compass!



THE LIE....

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 says

“⁹The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, ¹⁰and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie.”

- Luke warm Christians are already succumbing to the spirit of lawlessness
- When Antichrist comes to power he will fool people with all his power, signs and wonders
- He will deceive the masses by convincing them of a subtle and powerful lie (either Jesus is not the Son of God and/or that God does not punish sin)
- People are being turned over to reprobate minds (Romans chapter 1)
- Who are those who believe the lie? Unbelievers, but also carnal Christians
- Even the strongest believer will face greater temptations and trials as the time of the end draws near!



THE ANSWER: THE HOLY SPIRIT

- God is preparing to pour out His Spirit in the Last Days (Peter and Joel 2:21-27)
- Holy Spirit will come upon the earth filling God's people with joy when the world is in upheaval
- This Harvest Rain is referred to by Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel all the way down to the minor prophets
- It will be a greater outpouring than at Pentecost
- Satan will try to hinder this Harvest Rain
- Revelation 14:14-15 says Jesus will come with a sharp sickle to reap the harvest because the earth is ripe

