

The Great Apostasy

1 Timothy 4:1-5. Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; 5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

- I. Paul has condemned false teaching in Ephesus repeatedly
 - A. 1 Timothy 1:3-4 remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,⁴ nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.
 - B. 1 Timothy 1:18-20 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,¹⁹ having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,²⁰ of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.
- II. Is it biblical for someone to lose, walk away from their salvation?
 - A. Jesus spoke about people abandoning Him
 1. Matt 24:9-13 9 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.
 - B. He also promised that those who followed Him are held close and secure
 1. John 10:27-30 **My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.** 28 And I give them eternal life, and **they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.** 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and **no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.** 30 **I and My Father are one.”**
 2. John 6:37-40 **All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.** 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 **This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.** 40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that **everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”**
 3. John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who hears My word and believes in Him** who sent Me **has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.**
 - C. Eternal Security of the believer/ “Once saved, always saved.”

1. Ephesians 1:13-14 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.
2. Ephesians 4:20-24 But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.
3. Philippians 1:6 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;
4. Is it conditional on our ability to obey??
 - a. 1 John 2:3-6 3 Now by this we know that we know Him, **if we keep His commandments.** 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But **whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**
5. [Romans 8:28-39](#) tells us that 1) no one can bring a charge against God's elect; 2) nothing can separate the elect from the love of Christ; 3) God makes everything work together for the good of the elect; and 4) all whom God saves will be glorified.
 - a. Romans 8:28-39 And we know that **all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.** 29 For whom He foreknew, He **also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son,** that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover **whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.** 31 What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, **how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?** 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is **God who justifies.** 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?** 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 **Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

D. mere profession of faith does not guarantee the actual possession of eternal life. The emptiness of mere profession would become clear by the departure from Christianity of some of the Ephesians

1. 1 John 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.
2. Matthew 7:21-23 “**Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.** 22 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!’
3. 2 Corinthians 13:5-6 5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. **Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?**—unless indeed you are disqualified. 6 But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.
4. 2 Peter 1:5-11 *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For **he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.** 10 Therefore, brethren, **be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.***
5. 1 Corinthians 6:11 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.
6. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
7. Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
8. Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

E. Picking Fruit

1. Ephesians 4:26-32 “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath,²⁷ nor give place to the devil.²⁸ Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has

- need. ²⁹ Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.
2. Galatians 5:22-26 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.
 3. Matthew 7:16-20 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them.
- F. So what do you think?? Is it possible for a genuinely saved person to “depart from the faith”
1. Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith,
 2. If people can leave the fold of Christ then every statement He made regarding holding His own close and secure is proven false.
 - a. Preaching against security to make people safe
 - i. “If there is no security and I preach that there is I have given people an excuse to not be concerned with their spiritual life. But if there is security and I preach there is not then I am helping people to keep an eye on their salvation and to strive to stay on the straight and narrow if they are afraid of losing their salvation and going to hell.”
 3. What is the greatest possibility regarding these church drop-outs??
 - a. It is most likely that they were not genuinely saved. They had prayed a prayer or gotten baptized and participated in communion but their heart was never changed. They may have done great and amazing things but had never been transformed.
 - b. Ezekiel 36:24-36 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. ²⁸ Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. ³⁰ And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. ³¹ Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. ³² Not for your sake do I do this,” says the Lord God, “let it be

known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!"

³³ "Thus says the Lord God: 'On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. ³⁴ The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. ³⁵ So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' ³⁶ Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it."

G. "deceiving spirits" –

1. may be supernatural evil spirits who work through individuals,
 - a. Luke 22:3 Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. 4 So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. 5 And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. 6 So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.
2. It is best to view the term "deceiving spirits" as a reference to the false teachers themselves.
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

III. Vs 2-4

- A. 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,
 1. Ephesians 4:17 (NKJV Strong's) This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.
- B. V3 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.
 1. 1 Timothy 5:11 (NKJV Strong's) But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, 12 having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith
 - a. Paul actually encouraged people to marry so as not to "burn in their lusts"
 2. Not eating certain foods is a typical Jewish restriction.
 - a. Dietary laws and circumcision were the 2 things that immediately set them apart from every other nation they encountered.
 - b. Often came into play in the political arena of the church
 - i. Galatians 2:11-16 ¹¹ Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; ¹² for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. ¹³ And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their

hypocrisy. ¹⁴ But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?" ¹⁵ We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, ¹⁶ knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

C. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; 5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

1. Acts 10:13-16 And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴ But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." ¹⁵ And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." ¹⁶ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.