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Reprove → Rebuke → Reject → Refuse

The word **apostasy** is akin to a number of other key doctrinal terms not specifically found in the Bible such as Trinity, rapture, etc. But, its meaning can be found in the Bible's teaching.

The word comes from the Greek word "apostasia" which means a falling in the sense of deflection or rebellion. Mathew 19:7 [⁷ *They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?*] has the word "divorcement" or 'apostasion'. This word is translated as "forsake" in Acts 21:21 [²¹ *And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.*] Therefore, it may be defined in as a deliberate act of REPUDIATION (from Dictionary.com: to reject as having no authority or binding force; to cast off or disown, synonyms: abandon, spurn, reject, disavow, etc)

In this lesson, the term apostasy and apostate are used in the negative sense as the **ACT OF DEPARTING FROM THE FAITH**. We are living in days of great spiritual apostasy and moral decline, and it is absolutely vital that the child of God be fully aware of its danger.

I The Spectrum of Unbelief and Error

First consider the various forms of unbelief and departure from the faith spoken of in the New Testament. Some of which can apply to saved people and some which refer to lost people:

A. Unbelief – **NO FAITH**

1. Read Romans 4:18-21 to see unbelief is the opposite of FAITH ¹⁸
Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. ¹⁹ And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: ²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; ²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

2. Read Matthew 13:54-58 to see unbelief limits the mighty works of God. ⁵⁴ And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? ⁵⁵ Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? ⁵⁷ And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own

country, and in his own house. ⁵⁸ And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

3. According to Acts 16:31 a lost man must believe in order to be saved. ³¹ And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

4. In John 8:24, a lost man's unbelief means he will die in his sins. ²³ And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

5. According to Revelation 21:8, the unbelieving shall have their part in the lake of fire. ⁸ But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

6. Read Mark 16:14 which states it is impossible for a Christian to have unbelief in their heart. (from verse 12) ¹² After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. ¹³ And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. ¹⁴ Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided [to find fault with or reproach

severely; censure] them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

7. Read Hebrews 3:12-13 ¹² Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- a. This passage is addressed to “brethren.”
- b. Unbelief causes us to depart from the living God.
- c. A heart is hardened through the DECEITFULLNESS [deceit: concealment or distortion of the truth for the purpose of misleading; duplicity; fraud; cheating] OF SIN.
- d. To help in avoiding unbelief EXHORT one another.
- e. According to Psalm 119:11, another way to avoid unbelief is to hide God’s word in our hearts (from verse 10: ¹⁰ With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. ¹¹ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. ¹² Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.) **HIDE means what?**

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- f. Read Mark 9:24 to what our cry to the Lord should be when we find unbelief in our hearts: (from verse 17) ¹⁷ And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; ¹⁸ And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they

should cast him out; and they could not. ¹⁹ He answereth him, and saith, **O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.** ²⁰ And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. ²¹ And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. ²² And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. ²³ Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, **all things are possible to him that believeth.** ²⁴ And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, **Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.** ²⁵ When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. ²⁶ And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

[Summarize UNBELIEF, the first form of departure from faith]

B. Doubt – Little Faith

- 1. Read Matthew 14:25-31** ²⁵ And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. ²⁷ But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. ²⁸ And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. ²⁹ And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. ³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?
- a. Did Peter obey the Lord? – YES
 - b. Jesus said Peter had “little” faith (verse 31).
 - c. Being afraid (of the storm) caused Peter to take his eyes off the Lord (verse 30)!

- 2. Read Luke 12:22-31** ²² And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. ²³ The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? ²⁵ And which of you with taking thought can add to his

stature one cubit? ²⁶ If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? ²⁹ And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. ³⁰ For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. ³¹ But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

- a. According verse 30, it was the disciples concern over “all these things” that caused them to doubt the Lord.
- b. The focus of a Christian’s life should be the Kingdom of God.

3. **Read Romans 14** This chapter deals with the question of Jewish dietary laws and customs, holy days, and whether Christians are obligated to observe them... **The answer is no!** **[Another take on this passage of scripture: Young Christians need lots of rules while mature Christians need fewer rules.]** But, this does not give Christian the right to disregard those who struggle in those areas. ¹ **Him that is weak in the faith receive ye**, but not to doubtful disputations [*the act of disputing or debating; verbal controversy; discussion or debate*]. ² For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, **who is weak**, eateth herbs. ³ Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. ⁴ Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to

his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. ⁵ One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

a. According to verse 5c, it is important that every Christian be fully persuaded on such matters

⁶ He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. ⁷ For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. ⁸ For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. ¹⁰ But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ¹¹ For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. ¹² So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. ¹³ Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

b. ¹⁴ I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. According to verse 14, Paul was persuaded by the the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Let not then your good be evil spoken of: ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. ¹⁸ For

he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. ¹⁹ Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. ²⁰ For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. ²¹ It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. ²² Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. ²³ And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

- c. According to verse 23c, when we doubt God and his word, we sin.
- d. By what means should we be persuaded? “Hearing” Moses and the prophets [the Word of GOD] Read Luke 16:31: ²⁷ Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: ²⁸ For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. ²⁹ Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. ³⁰ And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. ³¹ And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

[Summarize LITTLE FAITH, the 2nd form of departure from faith; it is FEAR and the worries of this world which diminishes our faith. Our own beliefs (things that we create in our mind) cause our faith to be weak.]

C. Ignorance – Growing Faith

The word ignorant means “uninformed” or “unlearned”...
lacking in knowledge.

1. **Jews ignorant of the WORD of GOD (not wanting to know).**

- a. **Ephesians 4:18 (from verse 17)** ¹⁷ This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, ¹⁸ Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the **ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:**
- b. **Study Acts 3:17 (from verse 12 after Peter healing the lame man at the temple gate)** ¹² And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. ¹⁴ But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; ¹⁵ And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. **¹⁷ And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.** ¹⁸ But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. ²⁰ And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: ²¹ Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things,

which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

2. Gentiles ignorant of the WORD of GOD.

Romans 11:25 ²⁵ For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

3. Ignorance is indicative of youth: read I Peter 2:2 [from verse 1

to 3] ¹ Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, all evil speakings, ² As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: ³ If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

4. Be patient with a slow steady growth in Christ. Read II Peter

3:18 [from verse 17] ¹⁷ Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. ¹⁸ But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

[Summarize IGNORANCE, the 3rd form of departure from faith; it applies to both Jew and Gentile, is indicative of superficial knowledge, and requires steadfastness/patience so that a believer is not lead down false paths.]

D. Error – False Faith

1. **Read Matthew 22:29 to see that error can come because we do not know the scriptures. [when questioned about who will be whose wife in heaven]** ²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, **Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.** ³⁰ **For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.**
2. **Study I Timothy 6:10 to see that covetousness causes us to have false faith. It causes us to believe what we want or wish to believe. [from verse 9]** ⁹ But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰ For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ¹¹ But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.
3. **According to I Timothy 6:20-21, false “science” (that which is opposition to the WORD of GOD) will lead to error. [discuss examples]** ²⁰ O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: ²¹ Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

4. Study II Peter 3:16 – 17 to see how Christians can be led astray by the error of those that wrest with the scripture.

[from verse 10] ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹ Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. ¹⁴ Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. ¹⁵ And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; ¹⁶ **As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.** ¹⁷ Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. ¹⁸ But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

[Summarize ERROR, the 4th form of departure from faith]

- **KNOW** what scripture says
- **Covetousness (and sin in general) will cause us to err.**
- **Those studies in opposition to the Word of God (false science) cause us to err.**
- **Avoid persons who wrest with scripture.**

E. Heresy – Subverted Faith

The word heresy (Gk: hairesis) literally means a choice. When used in connection with faith and the Word of God, it means **a deliberate alignment with the side of error.**

Heresy is much more than ignorance. It is more than simply holding to an error. It is taking error against truth. In Acts 5:17, 15:5, 24:5, 26:5, and 28:22 the word is translated as “sect”, which shows the concept of heresy involves forming a ‘party’ within the main body. For an example of the use of “haiesis”, read Acts 24:5 *⁵ For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.*

- 1. Heresy is a work of the flesh. Read Galatians 5:20 from verse 19:** *¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, **heresies**, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*
- 2. Heresies are self-chosen doctrines not emanating from God. Read and study 2 Pet. 2:1** *¹ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [secretly] shall bring in damnable **heresies**, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. ² And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. ³ And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you:*

- 3. A church member is whose is a heretic is given two (2) chances to conform to the Word of God or be rejected. Read Titus 3:10 from verse 1 since the words are so inspiring:** *¹ Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, ² To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. ³ For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. ⁴ But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, ⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; ⁶ Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; ⁷ That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. ⁹ But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. ¹⁰ **A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;***
- 4. A heretic is one who has been subverted. Subversion is the method often used by reprobates. Read Titus 3:11 ¹¹ **Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.****
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[Summarize HERESY, the 5th form of departure from faith;

- **Self chose doctrine not from God**
- **Alignment with error**
- **Work of the flesh**

F. Apostasy – **Repudiated Faith**

As stated previously, apostasy is a deliberate act of repudiation of the faith and the Word of God. This is contradiction to ‘The Faith’ which refers to the whole body of truth “delivered unto the saints” Read Jude verse 3: ³

*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith **which was once delivered unto the saints.***

Read: I Timothy 4:1-3 ¹ *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; ² Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; ³ Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

1. According to verse 1, to apostatize means to depart from the faith (a deliberate act of repudiation).
2. This passage from I Timothy 4 gives five (5) marks of an apostate:
 - a. An apostate has listened to and given credence to seducing spirits.
[Read I John 4:6 to see this seducing spirit is called the spirit of error: ⁶ *We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, **and the spirit of error.***]
 - b. An apostate has accepted devilish doctrine. [Read Hebrews 13:9 to see these diverse and strange doctrines. ⁹ *Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.*] These doctrines are contrary to what Titus 2:1 calls “sound doctrine.”

- c. An apostate is a lying **hypocrite** (verse 2 from I Timothy 4). Apostates always pretend to be what they are not!
- d. An apostate has a **guilty conscience** (also from verse 2). Read Romans 2:15 see **the conscience bears witness to God's moral law**. ¹⁵ *Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;*
- e. An apostate **forbids and condemns** contrary to God's law. Note: both marriage (Hebrews 13:4a) and meats (Colossians 2:16) are sanctioned by God's word.

[Summarize Apostate, the 6th form of departure from faith]

- **Deliberately depart from the Faith**
- **Yield themselves to seducing spirits and error**
- **Believe in diverse/strange doctrines**
- **Are lying hypocrites**
- **Suffer from guilty consciences**
- **Forbids and condemns**

G. Reprobation – Counterfeit Faith

To familiarize yourself with reprobation, first read:

Read II Timothy 3:6-8 (from verse 1) ¹ *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.* ² *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,* ³ *Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,* ⁴ *Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;* ⁵ *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.* ⁶ ***For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,*** ⁷ ***Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*** ⁸ ***Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.***

Read Titus 1: 13-16 (from verse 8) ⁸ *But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;* ⁹ *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.* ¹⁰ *For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:* ¹¹ *Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.* ¹² *One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, the Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.* ¹³ ***This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;*** ¹⁴ ***Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.*** ¹⁵ ***Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.*** ¹⁶ ***They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.***

These passages describe another class of religious “ministers” – referred to in 2 Peter 2:1 and Jude 4 as false teachers. They are reprobate concerning the faith.

- **2 Peter 2:1** ¹ *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*
- **Jude 4** ⁴ *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1. What they are:

- a. They are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (2 Tim 3:7 , ⁷ *Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*)**
- b. They resist the truth (2 Tim 3:8 ⁸ *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.*)**
- c. They are willing ignorant of God’s word and promises. Read 2 Peter 3:5 ⁵ *For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:***

- d. **They profess to be Christians. Titus 1:16** ¹⁶ *They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*
- e. **They are not of us (they left). 1 John 2:19** ¹⁹ *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*
- f. **They wolves in sheep's clothing. Matt 7:15** ¹⁵ *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*
- g. **They are ungodly men. Jude 4**
- h. **They are twice dead. Jude 12:** ¹² *These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, **twice dead**, plucked up by the roots;*
- i. **They have not the Spirit. Jude 19:** ¹⁹ *These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*
- j. **They are Satan's ministers 2 Corinthians 11:15 (from verse 13)** ¹³ *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

k. **They are NOT of the cross. Philippians 3:18-19** ¹⁸ *(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)* ²⁰

2. What they do:

a. **Reprobate creep in unawares according to Jude 4 (from verse 3)** ³

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. ⁴ For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵

- **Warning: They get into our churches. Read Acts 20: 28-29** ²⁹ *For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*
- **And among our people: 2 Tim 3:6 (from verse 1)** ¹ *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ⁶ **For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led***

away with divers lusts, ⁷ Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- **Sometimes by direct contact: Titus 1:10 - 11** ¹⁰ For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: ¹¹ Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

b. They feast [religious feasts] with Christians according to:

(a) **Jude 12 (from verse 11)** ¹¹ Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. ¹² These are spots in your feasts of charity, when **they feast** with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

(b) **II Peter 2:13 From verse 12)** ¹² But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; ¹³ And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings **while they feast with you;**

c. They deceive and seduce. Read II Timothy 3:13 (referring to perilous end days) ¹³ But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

d. They turn men from the truth. Titus 1:14 (from verse 12) ¹² One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, the Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. ¹³ This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; ¹⁴ Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and **commandments of men, that turn from the truth.**

- e. **They cause men to swerve from the truth. Read I Tim 1:6 - 7** ⁶ From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; ⁷ Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

- f. **Reprobates make merchandise of God's people. Read II Peter 2:3 (from verse 2)** ² And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. ³ **And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.**

3. What they teach:

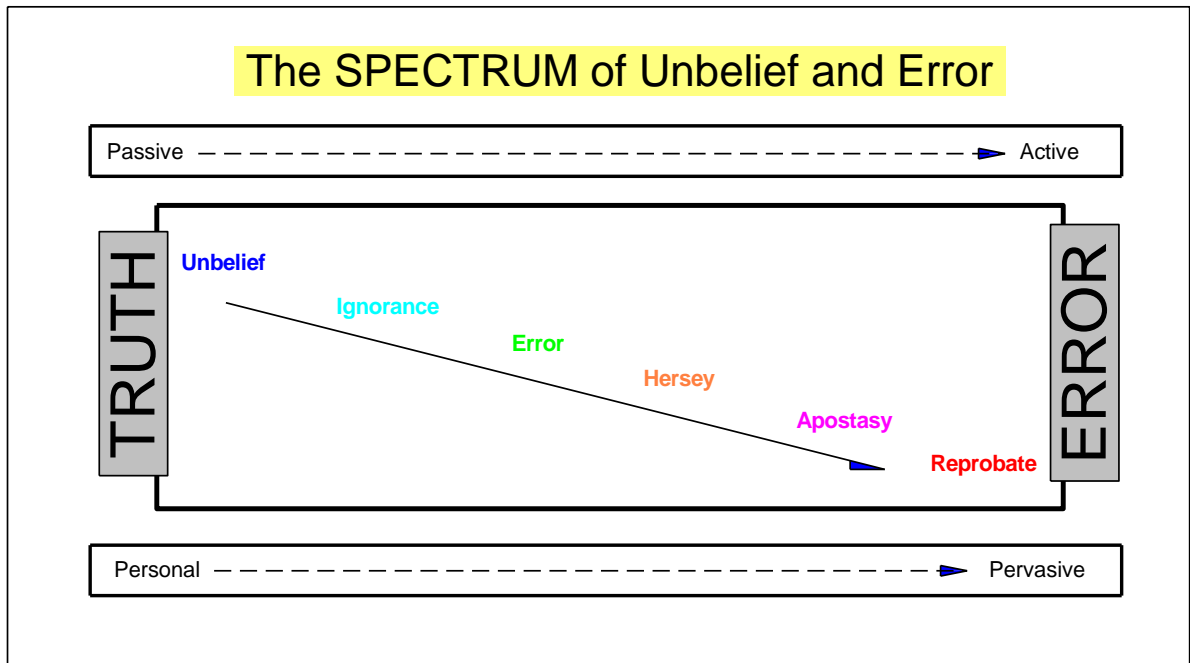
- a. **Reprobates teach damnable heresies (heresies are self chosen doctrines NOT from God, aligned with error, and works of the flesh).** **Read II Peter 2:1** ¹ *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

- b. **Reprobates teach counterfeit liberty. Read 2 Peter 2:19 (verses 18-22 since it's so interesting)** ¹⁸ *For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.* ¹⁹ *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.* ²⁰ *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are*

again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. ²¹ For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. ²² But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

[Summarize Reprobation, the 7th form of departure from faith]

Reprobates are unsaved professors of true (Bible) Christianity who are in reality Satan’s agents engaged in fomenting error, heresy, and apostasy within God’s true churches.

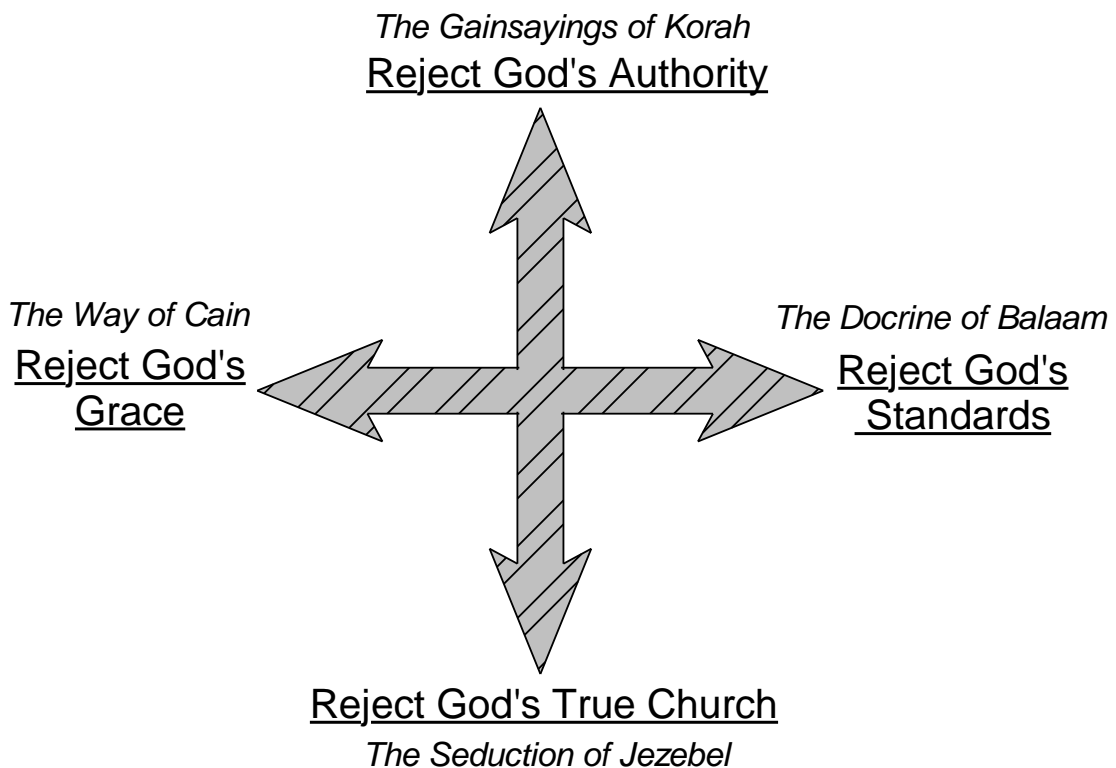


II Four Inroads to Apostasy

Satan's efforts to destroy the Lord's churches comes on four fronts. His attacks can be seen in scripture as well as throughout Christian history, and it is absolutely vital that Bible-believing Baptists clearly understand where the battles are to be fought, how the Devil will maneuver, and when to take a stand.

This section will consider these four key battlegrounds for the faith. These 4 are:

The four major inroads to Apostasy.



A. The Gainsayings of Korah [Reject God's AUTHORITY]

Read Jude 11 (from verse 10) ¹⁰ *But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.* ¹¹ *Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

The word “gainsaying” means to contradict, dispute, or resist, with respect to God’s appointed authority.

The story of Korah is found in Numbers 16: ¹ *Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, **took men:*** ² *And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, **men of renown:*** ³ *And they gathered themselves together **against Moses and against Aaron,** and said unto them, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?* ⁴ *And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face:* ⁵ *And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.* ⁶ *This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company;* ⁷ *And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.* ⁸ *And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:* ⁹ *Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?* ¹⁰ *And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?* ¹¹ *For which cause both**

thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him? ¹² And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: which said, We will not come up: ¹³ Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? ¹⁴ Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up. ¹⁵ And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the LORD, Respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them. ¹⁶ And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the LORD, thou, and they, and Aaron, to morrow: ¹⁷ And take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the LORD every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; thou also, and Aaron, each of you his censer. ¹⁸ And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron. ¹⁹ And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation. ²⁰ And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, ²¹ Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. ²² And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation? ²³ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ²⁴ Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. ²⁵ And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him. ²⁶ And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of their's, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. ²⁷ So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. ²⁸ And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them

of mine own mind. ²⁹ If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. ³⁰ But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. ³¹ And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: ³² And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. ³³ They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. ³⁴ And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. ³⁵ And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

- In verse 1, Korah and his associates “took men.” i.e. They incited others (even in position of leadership) to apostatize.
- In verse 3, we are told “they gathered themselves against Moses” and Aaron.
- In verse 28, Moses claimed his authority came from the LORD.

Now study the following scripture to note these same characteristics in godless reprobates:

- Read II Timothy 3:8 ⁸ Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. **Jannes and Jambres (the magicians of the Pharaoh’s court) withstood (resisted) Moses (God’s man).**
- Read 2 Peter 2:10 - 11: ¹⁰ But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. **False teachers despise government.**

- Read Jude 8: ⁸ *Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. **False teachers despise dominion.*** (dominion: the power or right of governing and controlling; sovereign authority.)
- Read Titus 1:10 ¹⁰ *For there are many **unruly** and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: **These deceivers are unruly (will not be ruled)!***

This adds up to one thing: apostasy embodies rejection of God's **authority** (The primary sin of Satan):

- **Authority of the Word of God** (the Authorized, King James Version)
Read Matthew 4:4 ⁴ ***But he [Jesus when being tempted by Satan] answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.***
- **Church authority.** Read Matthew 18:17 ¹⁷ ***And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.***
- **Pastoral authority:** Read Hebrews 13:7 ⁷ *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*
Read Hebrews 13:17 ¹⁷ *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

Baptists are on the road to apostasy when they:

- Turn from the turn from the pure Word of God (KJV),
- Question the verbal plenary [full; complete; entire; absolute; unqualified], inerrant, infallible inspiration of the Word of God,
- Refuse to submit - either in their personal lives or in their Churches – to the absolute authority of God (found in the Bible) in matters of faith, order, or obedience.

B. The Way of Cain [Reject God's GRACE] – Jude 11 ¹¹ *Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

The story of Cain and Able is found in Genesis 4:1-12 ¹ *And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.* ² *And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.* ³ *And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.* ⁴ *And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:* ⁵ *But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.* ⁶ *And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?* ⁷ *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.* ⁸ *And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.* ⁹ *And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?* ¹⁰ *And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood*

crieth unto me from the ground. ¹¹ And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; ¹² When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

NOTE:

- Cain was a tiller of the ground.
- His offering consisted of the fruit of the ground.
- The ground had been cursed through sin (read Gen 3:17 ¹⁷ *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*).
- Cain's offering consisted of his own **WORKS**. Read I John 3:12 ¹² *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*

Now study the following scriptures to note these same characteristics in godless reprobates:

1. False Teachers deny the Lord that brought them. Read 2 Peter 2:1¹ *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*
 - a. Believers are bought with a price. Read I Corinthians 6:20 ²⁰ *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*
 - b. The price of redemption is the precious blood of Christ. Read I Peter 1:18-19 ¹⁸ *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with*

corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: ²⁰ Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, ²¹ Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

c. Atonement for sin requires the shedding of innocent blood.

Read Hebrews 9:22 ²² *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*

2. False Teachers turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (lustful desire) **[Because since you are saved, you can get away with sin].**

Read Jude 4 ⁴ *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, **turning** the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

a. It is the grace of God that brings salvation. Read Titus 2:11 ¹¹ *For the grace of God that bringeth **salvation** hath appeared to all men, ¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*

b. The grace of God does NOT give us license to continue in sin. Read

- Romans 6:1 ¹ *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*
- Romans 6:15 ¹⁵ *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

3. False Teachers deny “the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Read Jude 4: *4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, **and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Read Romans 3:24-25: *24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance [to refrain or abstain from; desist from, not enforce] of God;*

We have been:

- Justified freely by His grace.
- Through redemption in Christ Jesus.
- Through faith in His blood.

The “way of Cain” adds up to one thing: Apostasy embodies the rejection of God’s grace – particularly the grace of God in salvation, but also God’s grace in holy living.

Baptists are on the road to apostasy when they turn aside from the pure Gospel of Christ to any other gospel of which many abound in today’s world:

- The social gospel
- The bloodless gospel
- The no-repentance gospel
- Gospels of works, legalism, emotionalism, etc.

The first Biblical example of this kind of error is found in Acts 15, where false teachers taught a ceremonial gospel (Acts 15:1 *1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.*) This teaching was/is in opposition to the one

true Gospel (Read Acts 15:11 ¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.)

This type of “Cain” error quickly became heresy, which developed into the first great historical apostasy – **Baptismal Remission!**

C. The Way (Error) and Doctrine of Balaam [Reject God’s

STANDARDS]

Read Jude 11: ¹¹ *Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and **ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward**, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

Read Numbers 22-25: ¹ *And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side Jordan by Jericho. ² And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. ³ And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel. ⁴ And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time. ⁵ He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me: ⁶ Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. ⁷ And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak. ⁸ And he said unto them, Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the LORD shall speak unto me: and the princes of Moab abode with Balaam. ⁹ And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee? ¹⁰ And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying, ¹¹ Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out. ¹² And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed... [as necessary, read the rest from the Bible.]*

- From Numbers 22:6, Balaam was hired by Balak, the king of the Moabites, to **curse** the children of Israel.
- From Numbers 22:17, Balaam was offered **great honor** to do Balak's bidding. *17 For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.*
- From numbers 22:21-34 Balaam was **rebuked by his ass** as he attempted to do what God had forbidden him. *21 And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. 22 And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him. 23 And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. 24 But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. 25 And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again. 26 And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. 27 And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff. 28 And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? 29 And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. 30 And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? and he said, Nay. 31 Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face. 32 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: 33 And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive. 34 And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.*

- From Numbers 31:16, **Balaam eventually** brought God's severe judgment upon Israel through his counsel. ¹⁶ *Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*

The New Testament speaks of the WAY (error) OF Balaam and the DOCTRINE of Balaam. Study scripture to see these same characteristics in godless reprobates.

1. The way (error) of Balaam.

- This way is **perverse**. Read Numbers 22:32e ³² *And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me:*
- This way loves **the wages of unrighteousness**. Read II Peter 2:15 ¹⁵ *Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;*
- This way **greedily after ... reward**. Read Jude 11 ¹¹ *Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and **ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward**, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

2. The doctrine of Balaam

- a. Balaam could not directly curse God's people. Instead he devised a roundabout plan to bring divine judgment upon them. He instructed Balak how to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel. Read Revelation 2:14 ¹⁴ *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a*

stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

- b.** Balaam's counsel to Balak was use the females of the Moabites to corrupt the men of Israel.
- Revelation 2:14d ...**to commit fornication**
 - Numbers 25:1 ¹ **And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.**
 - Numbers 31:15-16 (READ ALL OF CHAPTER 31 FOR CONTEXT) ¹⁵
And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? ¹⁶
Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.
- c.** Read Numbers 25:1-3 ¹ *And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.* ² *And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.* ³ *And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.*
- They abode at Shittim **(they lost their pilgrimage).**
 - They committed whoredom **(they lost their purity).**
 - They sacrificed and worshiped Moab's gods.**(they lost their peculiarity to God).**
- d.** Read Joshua 22:16-18 ¹⁶ Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the LORD? ¹⁷ Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, **from which we are not cleansed until this day,** although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,

The wickedness at Baal-Peor continued via a plague unto the next generation.

- e. The enemy vexed and beguiled the Israelites with their wives. Read Numbers 25:18a [from verse 16] ¹⁶ *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,* ¹⁷ *Vex the Midianites, and smite them:* ¹⁸ *For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.*
- f. Reprobates are able to beguile those who are unstable. Read II Peter 2:14 ¹⁴ *Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:* ¹⁵ *Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;*

This Rejection of God's Standards (The Doctrine of Balaam) means one thing: rejection of God's standards of morality and personal conduct to which believers are enjoined.

Baptists are one the road to apostasy when they turn aside from godly living and godly standards in their homes and churches. Is this way, God wants us to be:

- "Peculiar:"
 - ❖ I Peter 2:9 ⁹ *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a **peculiar people**; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*
 - ❖ Titus 2:14 (from verse 12) ¹² *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;* ¹³ *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

¹⁴ *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a **peculiar people**, zealous of good works.*

- “Exemplary:”

- ❖ John 17:16 ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

- ❖ Ephesians 4:17-24 ¹⁷ This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, ¹⁸ Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: ¹⁹ Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But ye have not so learned Christ; ²¹ If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; ²³ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; ²⁴ And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

- “Separated:”

- ❖ Ephesians 5:6-8 ⁶ Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. ⁷ Be not ye therefore partakers with them. ⁸ For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

- ❖ I Thessalonians 4:1-7 ¹ Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. ² For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: ⁴ That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; ⁵ Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: ⁶ That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. ⁷ For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

- ❖ II Timothy 2:19-22 ¹⁹ Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. ²⁰ But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. ²¹ If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. ²² Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

As the children of Israel were subtly drawn into great wickedness when the Moabite women allured them through the lusts of the flesh (II Peter 2:1819 ¹⁸ *For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.* ¹⁹ *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*), so today the counsel of Balaam craftily seeks to displace spirituality with sensuality and consecration with carnality.

D. The Seduction of Jezebel [Reject God's CHURCH]

Read Revelation 2:20 statement to the church in Thyatira: ²⁰ *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

[from Wikipedia: Jezebel's story is told in 1st and 2nd Kings.[3] She is introduced as a Phoenician princess, the daughter of King Ethobaal, king of the Phoenician empire. Jezebel marries King Ahab of the Northern Kingdom (i.e. Israel during the time when ancient Israel was divided into Israel in the north and Judah in the south). She helps convert Ahab from worship of Yahweh to worship of the Phoenician god, Baal. After Jezebel has many of the prophets of Yahweh killed, Elijah challenges 450 prophets of Baal to a competition (1 Kings 18), exposes the rival god as powerless, and goes on to have prophets of Baal slaughtered (1 Kings 18:40), thereby incurring Jezebel's furious enmity.

The story concerns an intense religious-political struggle — the most detailed such account of any period in the history of the Kingdom of Israel. The account is mainly interested in the religious side of the events, with the political, economic and social background — highly important to modern historians—given only incidentally. Ahab's marriage to Jezebel was — at least to begin with — obviously a dynastic marriage intended to cement a Phoenician alliance, going back to the times of King Solomon, that gave the inland Kingdom of Israel access to international trade. The monarchy (and possibly an urban elite connected with it) enjoyed the wealth derived from this trade, which gave it a stronger position vis-a-vis the **rural landowners and made for a more centralized and powerful monarchical administration.** {the story of Jezebel is more than a story of an evil woman, but also of individuals battling the sovereignty of government.}

The story of Naboth, a landowner who was killed at the instigation of Jezebel so that the King could acquire his land, certainly points in this direction — Jezebel, with her foreign religion and cosmopolitan culture, representing a hated Phoenician alliance from which the landowners had little to gain and much to lose. Their resentment was expressed in religious terms (as in many other times and places), and eventually got a political expression in Jehu's bloody coup, instigated and supported by the prophets whose side of the story the Bible preserves.

The death of Jezebel is an example of how **God disfavored Christians from using government force in religious matters, such as the religious decrees by Jezebel and Ahab. Using force in the name of religion would lead to political persecution contrary to the Bible's teachings.**]

The account of the historical Jezebel is found in I Kings 16 to II Kings 9. In these passages we see that Jezebel:

- Was a pagan wife of king Ahab. Read I Kings 16:29-33 ²⁹ And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. ³⁰ And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. ³¹ And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. ³² And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. ³³ And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.
- Introduced Baal worship into Israel

- “Cut off” the Lord’s prophets. Read I Kings 18:4 (from verse 1) ¹ And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. ² And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. ³ And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: ⁴ For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)
- She was benefactress to 850 false prophets. Read I kings 18:19 [read verses 17-40 ¹⁷ And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? ¹⁸ And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. ¹⁹ Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. ²⁰ So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. ²¹ And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. ²² Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. ²³ Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: ²⁴ And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. ²⁵ And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. ²⁶ And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. ²⁷ And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. ²⁸ And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. ²⁹ And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. ³⁰ And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken

down. ³¹ And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: ³² And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. ³³ And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. ³⁴ And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. ³⁵ And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. ³⁶ And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. ³⁷ Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. ³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹ And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. ⁴⁰ And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

And from the next few passages of Chapter 19: ¹ And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. ³ And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

- Stirred up Ahab to work wickedness. Read I Kings 21:25 ²⁵ But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.
- Painted her face in an attempt to seduce Jehu. Read II Kings 9:30 ³⁰ And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window

Read all of I Kings 21: ¹ And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. ² And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it

for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. ³ And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. ⁴ And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. ⁵ But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? ⁶ And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. ⁷ And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. ⁸ So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. ⁹ And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: ¹⁰ And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die. ¹¹ And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. ¹² They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. ¹³ And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. ¹⁴ Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. ¹⁵ And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. ¹⁶ And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it. ¹⁷ And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ¹⁸ Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. ¹⁹ And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. ²⁰ And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD. ²¹ Behold, I will bring

evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, ²² *And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin.* ²³ **And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.** ²⁴ *Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.* ²⁵ *But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.* ²⁶ *And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.* ²⁷ *And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.* ²⁸ *And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,* ²⁹ *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.*

[Naboth "the Jezreelite," is the central figure of a story from the Old Testament. According to the story, Naboth was the owner of a plot on the eastern slope of the hill of Jezreel. Described as a small "plat of ground", the vineyard seems to have been all he possessed and lay close to the palace of Ahab, who wished to acquire to "have it for a garden of herbs" (probably as a ceremonial garden for Baal worship). Naboth, however, had inherited his land from his father, and, according to Jewish law, could not alienate it. Accordingly, he refused to sell it to the king. Ahab became deeply depressed at not being able to procure the vineyard, and returned to his palace, lying on his bed, his face to the wall, and refused to eat. His wife, Jezebel, after learning the reason for his depression, promised that she would obtain the vineyard for him. To do so, she plotted to kill Naboth by mock trial, and then told Ahab to take possession of the vineyard as the legal heir. As punishment for this action, the prophet Elijah visited Ahab while he was in the vineyard, pronouncing doom on him. Ahab humbled himself at Elijah's words, and was spared accordingly, with the prophesied destruction being visited instead on his son Joram.]

Ahab proved 2 Peter 3:9 ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. **He provides multiple chances for forgiveness if you turn from evil and towards his face.**

The “Jezebel” of Thyatira in Revelation 2:20 was a false teacher (perhaps a woman – read I Timothy 2:12 *12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*) in the mold and spirit of the ancient queen, Study the following scriptures to see the grave danger posed by this kind of reprobate.

1. According to Rev 2:20, Jezebel’s teachings and seduction was targeted on the Lord’s servants. *20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*
2. The first line of defense in any Bible-believing Baptist church is the pastor. Read Acts 20:28-31 *28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*
3. Jezebel’s doctrine is equated with the “depths” of Satan. Read Revelation 2:24 (from verse 20) *20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. 22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. 24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not **known the depths of Satan**, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. 25 But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. 26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:*

4. This fornicating woman is identified as the great whore. She is not just a false teacher... **she is a false system!** Read Revelation 17:1-9 ¹ *And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of **the great whore** that sitteth upon many waters:* ² *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.* ³ *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.* ⁴ *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:* ⁵ *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.* ⁶ *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.* ⁷ *And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.* ⁸ *The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.* ⁹ *And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.*

This is the coming ecumenical “Church” of the Antichrist, sitting of the seven hills – Rome. Right now the church of Rome and her Protestant daughters are moving ever closer to bringing about this new “Tower of Babel.”

5. Read Proverbs 7:6-21 to see the manner in which a harlot goes about seducing her unwary victim – she paints her face in order to look attractive. ⁶ *For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,* ⁷ *And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,* ⁸ *Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,* ⁹ *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:* ¹⁰ *And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.* ¹¹ *(She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: ¹² Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)* ¹³ *So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him,* ¹⁴ *I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.* ¹⁵ *Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.* ¹⁶ *I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with*

carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. ¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. ¹⁸ Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. ¹⁹ For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey: ²⁰ He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. ²¹ With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. ²² He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;

6. Revelation 18:4 commands God's people to come out of religious

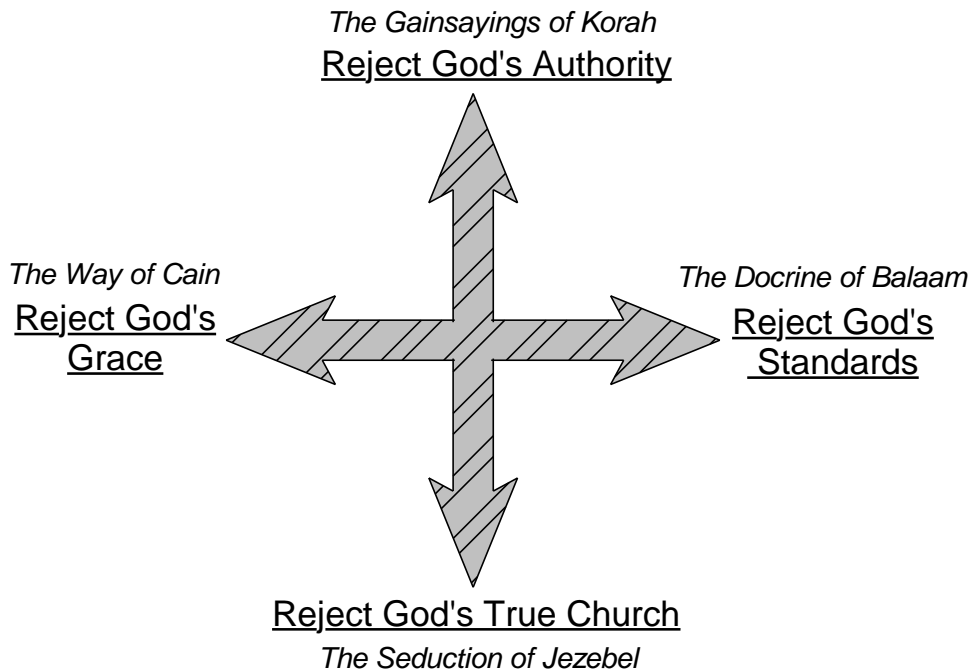
organization. (from verse 1) ¹ And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. ² And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. ³ For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. ⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.** ⁵ For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

7. According to Revelation 2:22-23, those who are ensnared by this Jezebel will end up with her in great tribulation. ²² Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. ²³ And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

This adds up to one thing: apostasy embodies the rejection of God's True Church. The pure, chaste, virgin churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. Read II Corinthians 11:2 – 4 ² For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. ³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Baptists are on the road to apostasy when they begin to involve themselves in the present day ecumenical movement, interdenominationalisms, parachurch organizations, etc. All such roads lead to the Harlot of Rome – a religious system which has always hated Baptists (re-read Rev 17:6 ⁶ *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*) Today Rome has “painted her face” and is alluring many unsuspecting men and women into a spiritual and eternal death trap.

The four major inroads to Apostasy.



III The Great Apostasy

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3 we are told of a “falling away” (apostasy) associated with the end of the present age. To understand what this means we must carefully consider the context of the message, some doctrinal explanation, and the sequence of events.

Read all of 2 Thessalonians 2: ¹ Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, ² That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. ³ Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall **not come**, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. ⁵ Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? ⁶ And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. ⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: ⁹ Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: ¹² That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. ¹³ But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: ¹⁴ Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. ¹⁶ Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, ¹⁷ Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

A. The Context (verses 1 and 2)

1. A first century AD doctrinal error put forward by reprobates was that the resurrection is PAST already. (Read II Timothy 2:18 [from verse 14] ¹⁵ *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* ¹⁶ *But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.* ¹⁷ *And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;* ¹⁸ *Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection **is past already**; and overthrow the faith of some.*)
2. Another term we use for the resurrection is “The **raising** of the saints.” Read I Corinthians 15:51-52 ⁵¹ *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,* ⁵² *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*
3. This false teaching (that the resurrection was already past) was cunningly devised to overthrow the faith of the believers. Read II Timothy 2:18 (again) ¹⁸ *Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.*
4. The members of the church at Thessalonica were shaken in mind, and troubled by false epistles saying the day of the Lord is at hand. Read again 2 Thessalonians 2: ² *That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.*
5. The apostle Paul comforted them by speaking of the coming of the Lord and the gathering of the saints unto Him as a yet-to-happen event. Re-read all of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 ¹ *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,* ² *That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.* ³ *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall **not come**, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*

B. Some Doctrinal Explanation

The “Day of Christ” (verse 2 ² *That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.*) is the period of time which begins with the coming of Christ **for** His saints, and encompasses the heavenly events associated with the Judgment Seat of Christ

- I Corinthians 1:7, 8 ⁷ *So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: ⁸ Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- Philippians 1:6 ⁶ *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*
- Ending in “that day” (2 Thessalonians 1:10 ¹⁰ *When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.*) when Christ returns in glory to earth **with** His saints.

Note: The “Day of the Lord” also begins at the same time, but relates to the earthly events associated with Daniel’s 70th Week and with the establishment of the millennial kingdom of Christ.

C. The Sequence of Events (Given [above] in 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-8)

1. The mystery of iniquity is already at work.

- Read 2 Thessalonians 2:7 ⁷ *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*
- Also, read I John 2:18 ¹⁸ *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*

2. The One Who presently “letteth” (hinders) will be taken out of the way.

Notes of the verse above:

- The “he who now letteth” refers to the present work of the Holy Spirit in restraining wickedness and the coming of the Antichrist.
- Why? Because of the personal pronoun “he” read John 14:17 *17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you., because He was known by these Christians (ye know”).*
- Also because I John 4:3-4 teaches that the indwelling Holy Spirit enables believers to be over comers in the face of the present-day “spirit” of the antichrist. *3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*
- When the Antichrist does come on the scene, he will be he over comer.

Read:

(a) Revelation 11:7 *7 And when they shall have finished their testimony [the 2 witnesses] , the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

(b) Revelation 13:7 *7 And it was given unto him [the Antichrist] to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

3. The Lord Jesus Christ will return as a thief in the night for His saints. Read:

- I Thessalonians 5:2 ² For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
- I Thessalonians 4:15-17 ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

4. The Day of the Lord and the Day of Christ will begin concurrently.

5. The Great Apostasy will take place. This is described in Psalm 2:1-3 as the day the whole world will throw off the Lord's "bands" (control) and "cords" (restraint).

Read all of Psalm 2 ¹ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, ³ Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. ⁴ He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. ⁵ Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. ⁶ Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. ⁷ I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, **Thou art my Son**; this day have I begotten thee. ⁸ Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. ⁹ Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. ¹⁰ Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹² **Kiss the Son**, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. **Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.**

Notes: One can only imagine the rampant lawlessness that will come upon the world when the “salt of the earth” is suddenly removed. This coming apostasy is being prepared in our day , as we more and more we see people refusing to follow sound doctrine (II Timothy 4:3-4 ³ *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴ And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

6. The man of sin will be revealed and present himself as the Messiah and world savior. Read (again) 2 Thessalonians 2: ¹ *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,* ² *That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.* ³ *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall **not come**, except there come a falling away first, and **that man of sin be revealed**, the son of perdition.*

7. The Antichrist will then sit in the Temple of God and claim to BE GOD. Read (again) 2 Thessalonians 2:4 ⁴ *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

8. The second coming of Christ will bring God’s vengeance. Read:
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:8. ⁸ *In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

 - 2 Thessalonians 2:8 ⁸ *And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

IV How to Deal with Apostasy

Apostasy is the deliberate departing from the faith – brought about (usually incrementally) through the introduction of error and heresy, often at the hands of reprobates

Questions to ask:

- How to prevent apostasy?
- How to deal with apostasy?

God's word gives clear answers.

A. God's Provision for Spiritual Discernment

Read I John 2:18-27 (from verse 15) ¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. ¹⁸ Little children, **it is the last time**: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. ²⁰ But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. ²¹ I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. ²³ Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. ²⁴ Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. ²⁶ These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. ²⁷ But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

This passage is written “concerning them that seduce you.” gives God’s double defense against apostasy:

1. God has given us “*an unction [the manifestation of spiritual or religious inspiration] from the Holy One*” (verse 20)
 - a. In verse 27 this is called an anointing by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Both these expressions refer to the Spirit of Truth. Read John 14 from verse 16: ¹⁶ *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷ Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*
2. We are also instructed to let that which we have heard from the beginning abide in us. (verse 24)
 - a. This refers to His commandments which we are to walk in. Read 2 John 1:6 ⁶ *And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*
 - b. According to 2 Peter 3:2 we are to be mindful of the words spoken by the profets! ² *That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: ³ Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, ⁴ And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. ⁵ For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: ⁶ Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: ⁷ But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are*

kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ⁸ But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

- c. Jude 17 instructs us to remember the words spoken before of the apostles: ¹⁷ *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; ¹⁸ How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹ These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*
- d. Continue reading Jude 20-24 ²⁰ *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, ²¹ Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. ²² And of some have compassion, making a difference: ²³ And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. ²⁴ Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*

God gives us 7 practical steps to avoid falling in error:

- Build yourself up on the most holy faith.
- Pray in the power of the Holy Ghost.
- Keep yourselves in the center of God's love.
- Look expectantly for the return of Jesus Christ.
- Make a difference in others through compassion and love.
- Save the lost through the Gospel.
- Hate sin, worldliness, and the flesh.

Read 2 Timothy 3:13-14 ¹³ *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.* ¹⁴ *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;*

We are admonished **to continue in the things that we have learned** (from the Word of God) **and been assured of** (by the Spirit of God).

We shall continue in the faith if we **know the truth and obey the truth.**

Read the promise of I John 2:24 ²⁴ *Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.* ²⁵ *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.* ²⁶ *These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.*

B. God's Prescript to Solemn Duty

Here's a five-fold plan Baptists must adhere for dealing with error, heresy, apostasy, and reprobates which abound throughout our culture:

1. NO RESPITE - Surveillance (watch!)

- a. Pastors are instructed to "watch". Read Acts 20:31 (from verse 28 to get the context of speaking to ministers) ²⁸ *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.* ²⁹ *For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.* ³⁰ *Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.* ³¹ **Therefore watch, and remember,** *that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

- b. Paul exhorts Timothy to “watch in all things”. Read 2 Timothy 4:5 ² *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.* ³ *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;* ⁴ *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* ⁵ *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*
- c. According to Hebrews 13:17 pastors are charged to watch for our souls. Read: ¹⁷ *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

There must be unceasing surveillance.

2. NO FELLOWSHIP – Separation

- a. We must have NO fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Read Ephesians 5:11 (from verse 1) ¹ *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;* ² *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.* ³ *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;* ⁴ *Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.* ⁵ *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.* ⁶ *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* ⁷ *Be not ye therefore partakers with them.* ⁸ *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:* ⁹ *(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)* ¹⁰ *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.* ¹¹ ***And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,*** but rather reprove them. ¹² *For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*

- b.** We must withdraw from those with corrupt minds, destitute of the Truth. Read I Timothy 6:5 (from verse 1 for context) ¹ *Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.* ² *And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.* ³ *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;* ⁴ *He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,* ⁵ *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: **from such withdraw thyself.***
- c.** 2 Timothy 3:5c instructs us to turn away from false teachers and teaching. (from verse 1) ¹ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: **from such turn away.**

There must be unwavering separation.

3. NO TOLERANCE – Steadfastness

- a.** Churches are to mark (brand) and avoid deceivers who cause divisions and offenses contrary to sound doctrine. Read Romans 16:17 ¹⁷ *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*
- b.** We are not to receive false teachers into our homes or the house of God. Read 2 John 10 ⁹ *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the*

5. NO QUARTER – Create unrelenting safeguards.

- a. In Revelation 2:2b, Jesus commended the church of Ephesus because they tried false teachers who claimed to be apostles. ² *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:*
- b. Read I Timothy 1:20 from verse 19) ¹⁸ *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;* ¹⁹ *Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:* ²⁰ *Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

Those who had “put away concerning faith” were delivered unto Satan.

- c. Read I John 4:1 ¹ *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.* ² *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:* ³ *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

Because of false profits, we must **try** the spirits [like put on trial, not to sample]

Create unrelenting safeguards.

C. Summary

Reprove → Rebuke → Reject → Refuse

Memory Verse: I Timothy 4:1

Lesson 1 Outline

V The Spectrum of Unbelief and Error

- A. Unbelief
- B. Doubt
- C. Ignorance
- D. Error
- E. Heresy
- F. Apostasy
- G. Reprobation

VI Four Inroads to Apostasy

- A. The Gainsayings of Korah [Reject God's AUTHORITY]
- B. The Way of Cain [Reject God's GRACE]
- C. The Way (Error) and Doctrine of Balaam [Reject God's STANDARDS]
- D. The Seduction of Jezebel [Reject God's CHURCH]

VII The Great Apostasy

- A. The Context
- B. Some Doctrinal Explanation
- C. The Sequence of Events

VIII How to Deal with Apostasy

- A. God's Provision for Spiritual Discernment
- B. God's Prescript to Solemn Duty
 - 1. NO RESPITE
 - 2. NO FELLOWSHIP
 - 3. NO TOLERANCE
 - 4. NO COMPROMISE
 - 5. NO QUARTER
- C. Summary

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