

“The Great Falling Away of the Church is Well Underway” “ Great Revival vs. Persecution and Great Apostasy”

Does the Bible teach there will be a great revival or a great apostasy marking the End Times?

- **REVIVAL** is a return to God’s righteous decrees stemming from true repentance. It is demonstrated by uncompromising allegiance to the Life and Words of Jesus Christ, demonstrates a hunger for Bible truth, and a devotion to His Church. Revival is God centered, not man centered. Rejects paganism, inclusion and tolerance as “culture”
- **APOSTACY** is rebellion against God, any revision or abandonment of the Bible as absolute truth. It is demonstrated by a rejection of Godly doctrines once believed. Apostacy is man centered, not God centered. Embraces Paganism, tolerance, diversity as “culture”

Amazingly *Paul’s first written letter* to the Thessalonians (around 51 AD) addresses all of this! Paul travelled to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9) with Silas on his 2nd missionary journey and spoke in the local synagogue for 3 sabbaths. He reasoned with them using Old Testament scriptures to prove that Jesus as the Messiah had to suffer and die for their sin, and then rise again from the dead. The anointing of the Holy Spirit was so strong as Paul spoke that many Jews, a large number of gentiles, and chief women in of that city, believed in Jesus. Remember in just 3 short weeks Paul preached strong doctrines and a true Church was birthed!

Immediately a mob of angry, envious Jews assembled and attacked the house where Paul was staying, intending to bring Paul to trial. Soon the whole city was engulfed in an uproar against the Gospel: loyal brethren urged Paul and Silas to flee. This happened again in the next 2 cities Paul preached the gospel. Yet at each stop, a new body of new believer is planted and continues to grow rapidly. Paul is hindered by satan from returning to Thessalonica in person, so he sends Timothy to establish the new Church. From Corinth, Paul writes a letter (First Corinthians) to encourage these new believers in their faith, in how to live a godly life, and to avoid all forms of paganism and immorality. He focuses their hope on Jesus’ Return with every chapter (1:10; 2:19; 3:13, 4:13-18; 5:1-11, 23). Paul introduces the Rapture of the Church in chapter 4:13-19 and gives instruction about the Day of the Lord in Chapter 5.

As the new 1st Century Christians obediently separate from their old lifestyles, persecution is launched against them. Satan causes false teachers to discount and pervert Paul’s words, even saying that the new believers are experiencing the Tribulation, that the Day of the Lord has already come, and the Church has missed the Rapture.

Apostasy in Unleashed in the 21st Century Church - same false doctrines:

- No such thing as a literal anti-Christ, No Tribulation, no Apostasy
- No need to Repent or Separate from world, “Embrace the culture”
- Gospel is Man – centered, not God-centered – all about me - “best life now”
- Always declares coming great Worldwide Revival, never coming apostasy

2nd Thessalonians – Chapter Two

- ¹ Now we beseech you, brethren, by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together to Him,
- ² That you 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 (apostasia) , and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
- ⁴ Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God.
- ⁵ Remember not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?
- ⁶ And now you know what withholds that he might be revealed in his time.
- ⁷ For the mystery of iniquity does already work: only he who now lets will let (restrains), 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 always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God has 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 you have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.
- ¹⁶ Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, Who has loved us, and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,
- ¹⁷ Comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.

Clearly, this has not yet happened; no one since Paul's time has set himself up as God in the Jewish Temple. Almost 2,000 years have passed since this letter was written: the "Day of the Lord" has not yet come. Paul assures us that it will not come until the falling away comes first.

The Greek word translated "rebellion" or "falling away" in verse 3 is apostasia, from which we get the English word apostasy. You can't depart from truth that you never were a part of! Just like you can't be divorced unless you were married first. The "once saved, always saved doctrine" is refuted many places in the Word. Consider these verses:

Apostasy , falling away	2 Thessalonians 2:1-4
Shipwreck their faith	1 Timothy 1:18-19
blot out your name	Rev. 3:5; Rev 22:18-19
twice dead	Jude 1:12
depart from the faith	1 Timothy 4:1-2
Reprobate	Rom 1:28; 2 Tim 3:8; Titus 1:16
Love wax cold	Matthew 24:10-12
God will remove your lampstand	Rev 2:5
You have fallen away from grace	Galatians 5:4
Entangled again and overcome	2 Peter 2:20
Keep watch unless you too be tempted	Galatians 6:1
I will spit you out of My mouth	Rev 3:15-16

'Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times, some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron." 1 Timothy 4:1-2

Jesus warned the disciples in Matthew 24:10-12 about the apostasy in the final days:

¹⁰ And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.¹¹ And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

"Then the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will He find faith on this earth?" Luke 18:6-8