

The biblical warnings against apostasy, therefore, are warnings to those who are under the umbrella of "Faith" without ever having truly exercised faith.

**"Apostasy Is An Intentional Falling Away Or Defection."**

Scriptures such as (Hebrews 6:4-6) "For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the Word of God and the powers of the age to come and then have fallen away, since on their own they are crucifying again the Son of God and are holding him up to contempt." And Hebrews 10:26-29 warns against the sin of apostasy. "For if we willfully persist in sin after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy "on the testimony of two or three witnesses." How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by those who have spurned the Son of God, profaned the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace?"

**Apostasy is an intentional falling away or defection. Apostates are those who move toward Christ, right up to the edge of saving belief, who hear and understand the Gospel, and are on the verge of saving faith, but then reject what they have learned and turn away.** These are people who are perhaps even aware of their sin and even make a profession of faith. But rather than going on to spiritual maturity, their interest in Christ begins to diminish, the things of the world have more attraction to them rather than less, and eventually they lose all desire for the things of God and they turn away. The Lord illustrated these types of people in the second and third soils of Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23. These are those who "receive with joy" the things of the Lord, but who are drawn away by the cares of the world or turned off by difficulties they encounter because of Christ. "Willful sinning" in this passage carries the idea of consciously and deliberately rejecting Christ. To know God's way, to hear it preached, to study it, to count oneself among the faithful, and then to turn away is to become apostate. Sinning willfully carries with it the idea of sinning continually and deliberately. Such a person does not sin because of ignorance, nor is he carried away by momentary temptations he is too weak to resist. The willful sinner sins because of an established way of thinking and acting which he has no desire to give up. The true believer, on the other hand, is one who lapses into sin and loses temporary fellowship with God. But he will eventually come back to God in repentance because his heavenly Father will continually woo and convict him until he can't stay away any longer. The true apostate will continue to sin, deliberately, willingly and with abandon. John tells us that "No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9).



The Message to Laodicea - Revelation 3:14-21  
 "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God's creation: "I know your works; you are

neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I Am about to spit you out of My mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.' You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. Therefore I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I Am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with Me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with Me on My throne, just as I Myself conquered and sat down with My Father on His throne."

**"Why Did Jesus Speak So Strongly Against Lukewarm Faith?"**



In Revelation 3:14-21, the Lord is describing the "Lukewarm" heart attitude of those in the Laodicean church, an attitude manifested by their deeds. The Laodiceans were neither cold nor hot in relation to God, just lukewarm. Hot water can cleanse and purify; cold water can refresh and enliven. But

lukewarm water carries no similar value. The Laodiceans understood the Lord's analogy because their city drinking water came over an aqueduct from a spring six miles to the south, and it arrived disgustingly lukewarm. Laodicean water was not hot like the nearby hot springs that people bathed in, nor was it refreshingly cold for drinking. It was lukewarm, good for nothing. In fact, it was nauseating, and that was the Lord's response to the Laodiceans—they sickened Him, and He said, "I Am about to spit you out of My mouth" (verse 16). The letter to the church at Laodicea is the harshest of the seven letters to the churches in Asia Minor. By His indictment of their "deeds" (Revelation 3:15), Jesus makes it clear that this is a dead church. The members of this church see themselves as "rich" and self-sufficient, but the Lord sees them as "wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked" (verse 17). Their lukewarm faith was hypocritical; their church was full of unconverted, pretend Christians.



"Behold I Knock"



The fact that the lukewarm individuals to whom Christ speaks are not saved is seen in the picture of Jesus standing outside of the church (Revelation 3:20). He has not yet been welcomed into their midst. In love, the Lord rebukes and disciplines them, commanding them to repent (verse 19). He sees their lukewarm attitudes as "shameful nakedness" that needs to be clothed in the white garments of true righteousness (verse 18). He urges them to be earnest, or zealous, and commit themselves totally to Him. Our Lord is gracious and long-suffering

"A False Sense Of Security"

The Laodiceans enjoyed material prosperity, and their true religion, led them to a false sense of security and independence (Mark 10:23) "Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" The expression "I am rich; I have acquired wealth" (Revelation 3:17) stresses that the wealth attained came though self-exertion. Spiritually, they had great needs. A self-sufficient attitude and lukewarm faith are constant dangers when people live lives of ease and prosperity.

"What is an Apostate or Apostasy?"

Lukewarm people are APOSTATES. What is an Apostate and/or Apostasy? "After receiving knowledge of the truth, that is, the Gospel, they wilfully remain in sin. An Apostate has seen and heard the truth - he knows it well - but he wilfully rejects it. Apostasy has two major characteristics: "Knowledge of the Truth of the Gospel and wilful rejection of it." It is clear from the Bible that apostates are people who made professions of faith in Jesus Christ but never genuinely received Him as Savior. They were pretend believers. Those who turn away from Christ never really trusted Him to begin with, as Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-23, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven. On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.'

"The Wheat And The Tares"

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (Matthew 13:24-30) provides a simple illustration of apostasy. In the same field were growing wheat and "false wheat" (tares or weeds). At first, the difference between the two types of plants was undetectable, but as time went on, the weeds were seen for



what they were. In the same way, in any given church today, there may be true, born-again believers side by side with pretenders—those who enjoy the messages, the music, and the fellowship but have never repented of their sins and accepted Christ by

faith. To any human observer, the true believer and the pretender look identical. Only God can see the heart. Eventually, a pretender will apostatize—he will "fall away" from the faith he once professed—if he does not repent. Like the tares among the wheat, his true nature will be manifest. Matthew 13:1-9 (the Parable of the Sower) is another illustration of apostasy in action.

"The Passages Warning Against Apostasy Serve Two Primary Purposes."



First, they exhort everyone to be sure of their salvation. One's eternal destiny is not a trifling matter. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 13:5 - "Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless, indeed, you fail to meet the test!" One test of true faith is love for others (1 John 4:7-8) Beloved, let us love one

another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love." Another is good works. Anyone can claim to be a Christian, but those who are truly saved will bear "fruit." A true Christian will show, through words, actions, and doctrine, that he follows the Lord. Christians bear fruit in varying degrees based on their level of obedience and their spiritual gifts, but all Christians bear fruit as the Spirit produces it in them (Galatians 5:22-23). Just as true followers of Jesus Christ will be able to see evidence of their salvation (1 John 4:13) "By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit." Apostates will eventually be made known by their fruit (Matthew 7:16-20) "You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? "In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits" or lack thereof. (John 15:12) "He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit He prunes to make it bear more fruit."

## "Apostates Have Knowledge, But No Application Of That Knowledge"



Judas  
Betrayed Jesus  
For 30 Pieces  
Of Silver.

"Apostate"

Apostates can be found in the presence of the light of Christ, mostly in the church, among God's people. Judas Iscariot is the perfect example—he had knowledge but he lacked true faith. No other rejecter of the truth had more or better exposure to the love and grace of God than Judas. He was

part of Jesus' inner circle of disciples, eating, sleeping, and traveling with Him for years. He saw the miracles and heard the words of God from Jesus' very lips, from the best preacher the world has ever known, and yet he not only turned away but was instrumental in the plot to kill Jesus. Having turned his back on the truth, and with full knowledge choosing to willfully and continually sin, the apostate is then beyond salvation because he has rejected the one true sacrifice for sins: the Lord Jesus Christ. If Christ's sacrifice is rejected, then all hope of salvation is gone. To turn away willfully from this sacrifice leaves no sacrifice; it leaves only sin, the penalty for which is eternal death. Hebrews 10:26–29 passage is not speaking of a believer who falls away, but rather someone who may claim to be a believer, but truly is not. Anyone who apostatizes is proving he never had genuine faith to begin with. (1 John 2:19) **"They went out from us, but they did not belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But by going out they made it plain that none of them belongs to us.."**

## "Apostates Had A Profession Of Faith At One Time But Not The Possession Of Faith. "

There are many people who love religion for religion's sake and are willing to identify themselves with Jesus and the church. Who wouldn't want eternal life and blessing? However, Jesus warns us to **"Count The Cost"** of discipleship (Luke 9:23–26). Then he said to them all, **"If any want to become My followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for My sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves? Those who are ashamed of Me and of My Words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and of the Holy angels."** True believers have counted the cost and made the commitment; apostates fail to do so. Apostates had a profession of faith at one time but not the possession of faith. Their mouths spoke something other than what their hearts believed. Apostasy is not loss of salvation but evidence of past pretension.