

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **2Peter 2:20-22**. Sentinel, OK; 32.
- B. Tonight's lesson is said in love, due to some having family, and close friends who have become Christians and then fallen away.
- C. We want to show two things about 2Pet. 2:20-22:
 - 1. It is possible for a saved person (a Christian) to fall away.
 - 2. The doctrine of perseverance, "once in grace, always in grace" is not Biblical.
- D. This lesson is a study of the doctrine of apostasy.

I. THEY DID BECOME CHRISTIANS AND WERE IN THE SAVED STATE.

- A. Some will argue that the individuals spoken of did not become Christians in the first place. The text teaches otherwise.
- B. They had escaped the defilements of the world:
 - 1. The way around temptation; the way of God (1Cor. 10:13).
 - 2. Partakers of the divine nature by escaping corruption (2Pet. 1:4).
 - 3. The word is used in the reverse sense (Heb. 2:3).
- C. The words 'after' and 'again' make reference to the state of sin:
 - 1. 'After' indicates a time they had not escaped the defilements of the world (and be in sin).
 - 2. 'Again' would show they had come out of sin, only to go back into it.
- D. They had knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ;
 - 1. This Greek word indicates a deep knowledge (Eph. 4:13).
 - 2. An understanding of God's mystery (Col. 2:2).
 - 3. True knowledge is based on increasing godliness and maturity (2Pet. 1:8).
 - a. Which comes by receiving the word to become Christians (Ac. 2:41).
 - b. We are called by our knowledge of the gospel to be saved (2Th. 2:19).
 - c. We understand grace and are saved by it when we learn it (Col. 1:6,7).
- E. They had the commandments delivered unto them:
 - 1. The idea of delivered means to "give up or give over"(2Pet. 2:4).
 - 2. We have in our possession the word of God (Jude 3).
- F. Therefore, let us conclude that:
 - 1. These spoken of in verses 20,21 were lost in sin.
 - 2. Became Christians in the fullest sense of the word.
 - 3. Knew of the deep, mature things of Christ (they were teachers).

II. THEY COMMITTED SIN AND FELL AWAY FROM THE SAVED STATE.

- A. The word 'again' tells us that they entered into the practice of sinful things.
- B. Important in verse 20 are the words 'and are overcome' showing that these have been taken over by sin (Jn. 8:34; 2Pet. 2:19).
- C. It is possible to turn away from the gospel having once received it (Heb. 3:12-13; 6:4-6; 10:26,27; Gal. 5:4).
- D. Peter's example in verse 21 indicates a returning to the sinful condition one was in before baptism. Emphasis on the sow being 'washed' (2Pet. 2:22).

III. THE LAST STATE (END) HAS BECOME WORSE THAN THE FIRST.

- A. We recognize three states these people have been in:
 - 1. Lost in sin because they have not become Christians.
 - 2. Saved by their knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Lost, again, because they rejected Christ's salvation.
- B. It is this third state, which Peter says is worse than the first.
- C. It is worse because:
 1. Jesus told us of seven spirits that return (Mt. 12:45).
 2. Such a state involves more guilt because of more knowledge (Lk. 12:47,48).
 3. It is more difficult to re-convert than to convert.
 4. The Scriptures speak of the impossibility of repentance due to willful sin (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26,27; 1Jn. 5:16).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. We have thus concluded from this passage the following:
 1. Those in the sinful state became Christians.
 2. They knew of the more mature things of the knowledge of Christ.
 3. They fell away, therefore, losing the salvation they once had.
 4. The last state (an unfaithful Christian) is worse than not being a Christian at all.
- B. We should try to re-convert erring Christians (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19-20).
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.