

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **2Timothy 4:9-15**.
- B. One of the saddest things in all of life is when those who have become Xians, decide to go not to be faithful to the Lord. They go back to the world, a life they feel is more worthy to live than one that is in X.
- C. Demas loved the present world more than he loved X--and went back to it.

## I. IT IS POSSIBLE TO FALL AWAY FROM THE LORD.

While some in the religious world teach a doctrine of perseverance that says it is not possible to fall from grace, the Bible teaches otherwise. Notice the following passages:

- A. The Xian can return to the world. The dog returns to its vomit, the pig to mud (2Pet. 2:20-22).  
For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. **21** For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them. **22** It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire."
- B. For Xians to keep the Law, is to fall from the grace found in X (Gal. 5:4).  
You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.
- C. Xians have a responsibility to keep each other faithful (Heb. 3:12-13).  
Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. **13** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
- D. Some fall purposely and will never return (Heb. 6:4-6).  
For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, **5** and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **6** and *then* have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.
- E. The apostasy of many was foretold (1Tim. 4:1).  
But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,
- F. Peter boasted of never falling away, but he did (Mt. 26:31, 33).  
Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED.' **33** But Peter said to Him, "*Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.*"
- G. Jesus said many would fall way prior to Jerusalem's destruction (Mt. 24:10).  
At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.
- H. Paul warns of the possibility of falling into sin (1Cor. 10:12).  
Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.
- I. Those who are spiritual are to restore Xians who are caught up in sin (Gal. 6:1).  
Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.
- J. We are warned not to fall like those in the wilderness did (Heb. 4:11).  
Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following* the same example of disobedience.
- K. Sinning willfully, means a terrifying (end) thing to come to God in a fallen state (Heb. 10:26-31).  
For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, **27** but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. **28** Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on *the testimony of* two or three witnesses. **29** How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and

has insulted the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know Him who said, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.” And again, “THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.” **31** It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- L. Jesus spoke of branches that would not remain in the Vine (Jn. 15:6).  
If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

## II. REASONS THAT PEOPLE FALL AWAY.

- A. While there is no reason one can give for not following X. There are many excuses offered.  
B. People fall away because:

1. They love the present world more than X (1Jn. 2:15-17; Mt. 24:35; 2Cor. 4:16-18).

This involves materialism, popularity, social causes, a girl-friend/boy-friend, etc.

**(1Jn 2:15-17)** Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves 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 boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. **17** The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

**(Mt. 24:35)** Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

**(2Cor 4:16-18)** Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. **17** For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, **18** while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2. They did not become a Xian for the right reasons in the first place.

Some people became Xians because:

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| a. Of family or spouse.                | d. Of peer pressure.              |
| b. They needed financial help.         | e. Bad marriage, loneliness, etc. |
| c. Of unmet social or emotional needs. |                                   |

People are to become Xians to have a relationship with God through X that will result in eternal life. The “side benefits” are that this relationship can improved all their other relationships.

3. Blasphemy (1Tim. 1:18-20).

Paul called it a “shipwreck” of their faith. This is the case of Hymenaeus and Alexander.

This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my* son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, **19** keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. **20** Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme.

4. Lost their first love (Rev. 2:1-5).

The energy and desire to serve X is no longer present. It is not a love of the world, but a lack of love for the things of God. The brethren in Ephesus had lost their first love even though they were doctrinally correct.

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:

**2** ‘I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false; **3** and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary. **4** But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. **5** Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place--unless you repent.

5. Belief in false doctrine (1Tim. 4:1-3).

It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires *to do*. **2** An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, **3** not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money.

As stated earlier some leave the faith because they begin to believe in doctrines of demons and

things not right (Rom. 1:23, 26, 28).

**(Rom 1:23)** and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. **26** For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, **28** And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

6. Continual sin (see Heb. 10:26-31).

Those who cannot give up their sin will not live a hypocritical life forever. They will either put away the sin, or put away the church.

7. Lack of support from the body (see 1Cor. 12:20-27).

Those who are not accepted into the family will soon look for another! We must go out of our way to be loving and visit those who are new Xians.

### III. THE PARABLE OF SOILS.

A. Another helpful text on why people fall away is that of the parable of the soils (see Lk. 8:5-15).

B. Jesus spoke of four different kinds of hearts:

1. One is very hard and does not receive the word (8:5, 12).
2. One starts good but does not finish (8:6, 13).
3. One does well for a while but is finally doomed by the cares of the world (8:7, 14).
4. The last kind of heart does well producing fruit in its faithfulness (8:8, 15).

C. Remember, there is very little you can do about the heart of another. The soil you plant the seed in is theirs, and what they do with the gospel is up to them.

D. Christians are not to convert--they are to sow the seed of the word (preach the gospel).

1. The great commission is to preach (Mk. 16:15).

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

2. We are to plant and water, God grants the increase (1Cor. 3:6-7).

I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

### IV. SOME PRACTICAL THINGS TO DO.

A. We do not want anyone to fall away and go back to the world.

B. Here are some practical things you can do to help people remain faithful:

1. Be an encourager (see Heb. 3:12-13).
2. Be a teacher (Heb. 5:12-14).

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. **13** For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. **14** But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

3. Pray for all the brethren not to be tempted (Lk. 22:40).

And when He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

4. Work with the Elders and practice Gal. 6:1.

Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.

5. Be a burden bearer (Gal. 6:2).

Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

A. It is a tragic thing to see someone fall away. The last state is worse than the first.

B. You can make a difference in the lives of others by being watchful.

C. You can come back to the Lord if you choose, or come to Him for the first time.

D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring-Xians.