

THE END – Part 7

THE GREAT FALLING AWAY

[2 Thessalonians 2:1-3](#)

According to Paul, the “Day of Christ” (i.e. the day when Christ shall come to gather His elect out of this world) will not come until there is a falling away. When we say there’s coming a great falling away we’re saying there’s coming a time in the end when MANY shall fall away from the faith (apostacy).

[1 Timothy 4:1](#)

Understand, a person doesn’t have to stop calling themselves a ‘Christian’ to fall away. They simply have to depart from the truth (or the faith once delivered to the saints—[Jude 1:3](#)).

Now, it’s called the GREAT falling away because the number of those who will fall away in the end will be significant (i.e. around $\frac{1}{3}$ of all Christians)!

[Revelation 12:3, 4a](#)

The ‘stars’ mentioned in this verse are a reference *Christians* who will be cast down (fall away) at the start of the Tribulation. (Remember we said to you in Part 4 of this series how this passage is a description of the time just before the start of the Tribulation.) According to this verse, $\frac{1}{3}$ of all Christians will fall away at the beginning of the Tribulation!

What causes people to fall away? Well, many fall away because they lack patience and perseverance.

[Matthew 13:20, 21](#)

[Matthew 13:21 ESV](#)

The seed sown on ‘stony ground’ endured only for a while before *falling away*. Why? Because it had no *roots*. Meaning, they lacked perseverance.

Now, we should point out that if we exclude the first group in this parable (the seed sown ‘by the way side’) then the seed on “stony ground” represents $\frac{1}{3}$ of the seed that actually produced a crop. Moreover, this $\frac{1}{3}$ fell away when TRIBULATION arouse!

This parable also reveals that another $\frac{1}{3}$ will fall away because they don't come to maturity.

[Matthew 13:22](#)

Some people don't believe it's possible to fall away once you are saved. But this is a deception.

[Hebrews 6:3-6a](#)

Notice that it's possible to receive the Holy Ghost and 'taste' the powers of the world to come and still fall away! Why? Because you do not go on to *perfection*.

[Hebrews 6:1a](#)

We read the same thing in the book of Revelation.

[Revelation 6:12-13](#)

Notice *why* these 'stars' fell—because they were like *untimely* (or unripped) *fruit!* (Incidentally, we read how these stars fell when the "sun became black" and the "moon became as blood." This is an indication that these things happen at the *end* of the Tribulation. See [Matthew 24:29](#))

This means that a *third* of Christians will fall away at the *start* of the Tribulation AND another *third* will fall away at the *end* of the Tribulation. Therefore, only a *third* will be saved in the end!

We should point out that there's one other thing that will cause a person to fall away—OFFENCE.

The word 'offend' means to **cause to stumble** or **fall away**. Moreover, we can bring *offence* by requiring people to act against their conscience.

[Romans 14:19-22](#)

Whenever we insist that a person participate in an activity they believe is sinful, we can become an occasion for offence (cause them to stumble and fall). Therefore, forcing someone to act against their convictions is equivalent to putting a stumbling block before their feet.

Everything we do we must do in faith. Otherwise, it will cause us to stumble and fall because this race can only be ran *by faith!* Moreover, anyone who promotes rules over faith are not serving the kingdom/ Christ. Instead, they're serving themselves!

We can ALSO bring offence by being overly critical or judgmental.

[Romans 14:13](#)

Therefore, when we judge or are overly critical of others we can place a stumbling block before their feet and cause them to *fall away* from the faith!

[Colossians 3:21](#)

Paul warns fathers that if they go too far with their correction, they can provoke their child to anger.

Meaning, rather than producing repentance, their correction will produce rebellion and cause their son or daughter to become discouraged.

Not every approach works well in every situation.

[Jude 1:21](#)

Jude reminds us the goal of all things—to stay (remain) in the *love of God*. Therefore, the things we do and say should always be for the purpose of remaining in the love of God!

[Jude 1:22](#)

Jude 22 GNB

When dealing with a person who has ‘doubts’ about the Christian faith (or their *own* faith), it’s best not to scold them. Instead, it’s best to have compassion on them.

This is completely different from the way you deal with someone who is further along in their development.

[Jude 1:23](#)

When you encounter someone who is strong willed or stubborn, the best way to ‘save’ them is by introducing terror or fear.

Let me just say a quick word to those who are victims of offence. It’s important that you learn to be *patient* with those who bring offence. Be careful not to retaliate, lest you FALL and come under condemnation (judgment)!

[James 5:6-9](#)

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. When we talk about the GREAT FALLING AWAY what are we talking about? Approximately how many Christians will be affected by the falling away that is coming upon the world?
2. Can you list two things that can cause to a person falling away? Do you believe these same things are the reason some leave the faith today? Have any of these things ever tempted you to leave God?
3. What are some ways that a person can bring offence or be offended? Have you ever witnessed someone leaving God because of a similar offence?
4. What advice does the Bible give to those who are victims of offence? Why do you think the Bible gives this advice to those who are victims of offence?