

A PORTRAIT OF APOSTASY

Judges 10:6-17

Sunday, January 29, 2017

By: Allen Coleman

I. INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS APOSTASY?

1. Tales From The Crypt

(1) Hand:

(i) People have left God because they couldn't spot the signs, often perpetrated by lies we've come to believe about God.

(2) My Santa Cruz friend

(3) **Steve the pastor**

Dear Pastor (Smith):

Over many years, I have been blessed to receive free tapes, CDs and books from your ministry. Thank you. At those times I really appreciated them. Now, I no longer believe in the God of the Bible or in Jesus Christ. Ten years of full-time ministry proved to me that there is no God and that the God of the Bible does not care. I now reject Christianity and have come to peace. What was at first a great loss has now turned to joy, peace and freedom. I did not leave the faith because of some extreme sin. I left because the God of the Bible, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are all a fantasy. I'm happy I now live in the real world. I only feel guilt about the many people whom I led to Christ and exposed them to the lies of Christianity. I'm not mad at Christians, I'm not mad at you. However, I am mad at myself for not being a more critical thinker. I won't make this mistake again.

*Again, thank you for the many years of help and teaching you all shared with me. I do appreciate what you all are trying to do with the knowledge you have. Please remove me from your mailing list. Save the money. Don't waste it on an **apostate** like me. I was just giving your CDs away. But now my conscience can no longer tolerate the further spread of a false hope and disappointment.*

Sincerely,

Steve... Agnostic

(4) People at Anthem who abandoned faithfulness

2. Apostasy Defined

(1) The simple definition of an apostate is this, an apostate is someone who knowing fully the gospel turns against it in complete rejection. And you could add the components, that there was at one point in time a professed belief in the gospel.



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II. APOSTASY BEGINS WITH RESIGNATION (v6-9)

1. Israel's Repeated Resignation

(1) Repetition = Resignation

(i) Baals

(v) Moab

(ii) Ashtaroath

(vi) Ammonites

(iii) Syria

(vii) Philistines

(iv) Sidon

(2) Illustration

(i) lorem

(3) The road to apostasy begins with resignation.

(i) Resignation is, in part, revealed in repetition

(4) All sins are not equal

JAM. 2:10 - *For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.*

WLC Q151 - *What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?*

[Sins receive their aggravations:

1. **From the persons offending:** *if they be of riper age, greater experience or grace, eminent for profession, gifts, place, office, guides to others, and whose example is likely to be followed by others.*[930]

2. **From the parties offended:** *if immediately against God, his attributes, and worship; against Christ, and his grace; the Holy Spirit, his witness, and workings against superiors, men of eminency, and such as we stand especially related and engaged unto; against any of the saints, particularly weak brethren, the souls of them, or any other, and the common good of all or many.*

3. **From the nature and quality of the offense:** *if it be against the express letter of the law, break many commandments, contain in it many sins: if not only conceived in the heart, but breaks forth in words and actions, scandalize others, and admit of no reparation: if against means, mercies, judgments, light of nature, conviction of conscience, public or private admonition, censures of the church, civil punishments; and our prayers, purposes, promises, vows, covenants, and engagements to God or men: if done deliberately, willfully, presumptuously, impudently, boastingly, maliciously, frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance, or relapsing after repentance.*

4. **From circumstances of time and place:** *if on the Lord's day, or other times of divine worship; or immediately before or after these, or other helps to prevent or remedy such*



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miscarriages; if in public, or in the presence of others, who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled.]

- (i) Some sins are worse with respect to their effect
 - (ii) Some sins are worse with respect to our awareness (Jesus - you'll be beaten with more stripes if you 'know right and don't do it' vs 'don't know the right and do wrong')
- (5) But all sins matter

[WLC Q152 - *What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God?*]

[WLC A152 - *Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness, and holiness of God, and against his righteous law, deserveth his wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come; and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ.*]

- (i) This is what James means.
- (6) ILLUSTRATION: Boys will be boys?
- (i) God is not like this.

2. *Every sin is a stripe on Jesus' back*

[COL. 1:22 - *...he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him...*]

- (1) He died for every transgression; every failing; every immorality; every little misgiving; every slight against another human being; every harsh word spoke; every lie; every injustice; every...single...sin.
- **BIG IDEA:** Apostasy begins with simple resignation. That somehow some sin matters less to God and is, subsequently, overlooked.
- (2) The road to apostasy is paved with resignation and religion. Both of which are seldom seen by their object. But, today is a good day...because detours abound in Jesus.



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III. APOSTASY PERSISTS WITH RELIGION (v10-14)

1. Religion apostasizes, not Christians

(1) How does a Christian lose their salvation?

[ROM. 8:37-39] - *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*]

(2) Counterfeits:

[HEB. 6:4-6] - *For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who 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, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.]*

(3) Examples of the Heb. 6 person:

(4) Judas

(i) Jesus never speaks of him as a believer; son of perdition

(ii) OT prophecy; Matt. 18 (tear among wheats)

(iii) Perfect illustration because Judas was three years in the ministry. He was a ministry partner with the eleven Apostles. He was a ministry partner with the Lord Jesus Himself. He was exposed to the perfections of Christ on a 24/7 basis. He was a preacher and from all that we can tell, he was there participating in the miracles that the Apostles were part of and that they actually did.

(iv) So he was fully engaged in the ministry, fully engaged in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. But of him, Jesus said this, "One of you is a devil."

(5) Demas:

[PHILEMON 1:24] - *...and so do Mark, Aristarchus, **Demas**, and Luke, my fellow workers....]*

(i) Demas is a minister....a pastoral.

[2 TI. 4:10] - *For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica...]*

(ii) Not just spatial...but spiritual

(6) Over and over again, the Bible account for the fact that there are people, some within the local church, who:



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- (i) appear to have faith
 - (ii) demonstrate what looks like faith
 - (iii) are knowledgeable and spiritual
 - (iv) but are in fact unconverted apostates.
- (7) So, what exactly are the hallmarks of religion vs the genuine Christian.
- (i) First, you need to know these are subtle, but noticeable if you're looking closely enough.
 - (ii) At least, three things here in the text...

2. Religion is worldly sorrow, not genuine contrition (v10)

(1) "cried out" = za'aq

(i) This is different from genuine contrition

[2 COR. 7:10 - For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.]

(ii) za'aq or 'worldly sorrow' is what is produced in us when our actions have a noticeable, visceral and immediate cost.

(iii) It is chiefly with concerned with things like reputation (how the world sees us) or our pain (how the world treats us) or provision (how the world gives to us).

(iv) It persists so long as those consequences persist.

(2) Genuine contrition, persists indefinitely.

[PSALM 51:17 - The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and **contrite** heart, O God, you will not despise.]

(i) Hebrew more complicated: passive voice (acted upon); imperfect verb form (continuous); absolute mode (irrevocable status).

(3) This is what Jesus is trying to communicate

[JN. 8:31 - "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples..."]

(i) Like a shrinking series of **bell-curves**.

[1 JN. 2:19 - They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, **they would have continued with us**. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.]

(ii) Continuity is a hallmark of genuine contrition and genuine Christianity.



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3. Religion is behavior modification, not genuine change (v11-12)

- (1) Behavior modification is the subsequent, natural result of worldly sorrow:
 - (i) It serves to get back what was lost (approval, comfort, security)
- (2) Just like the worldly sorrow that produced it, behavior modification can only last so long.
 - (i) Needs to see a return on investment to persist (parenting is like this)
 - (ii) We like behavior modification, because it makes things easier for the rest of us.**

[**VIDEO** - Stop it]

- (iii) It can last hours, days, months...in some cases...years. So long, that apostate Christians are indiscernible from the rest of the church.

[**JN. 2:23-25** - Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, **for he himself knew what was in man.**]

- (iv) Genuine change is inside...behavior modification is outside.
- (v) Paul picks up on what Jesus said in Jn. 8:31:

[**COL. 1:23** - "...if indeed you continue in the faith, **stable and steadfast**, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation...]

- (3) Behavioral change happens in spurts, rather than prolonged, steady, steadfast change.

4. Religion is pluralism, not genuine faithfulness (v13-14)

- (1) Israel is merging their faith with the surrounding culture.
- (2) It's ok. You can have Jesus and _____.
 - (i) Your pseudo-spiritualism
 - (ii) Mysticism
 - (iii) Superstition
 - (iv) Lifestyle

[**EX. 34:14** - ...for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God...]

- (3) God is not soft, God is not safe, God is not amenable



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- (i) His very name is Jealous
- (4) God: "You can't keep doing the same things and just expecting me to keep forgiving you."
 - (i) That is a Christian myth perpetrated by people who have never given full attention to Holy Scripture.
- (5) But what about grace?

[ROM. 6:1-4 - *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.]*

- (6) Recipients of grace, understand it is a gift not be abused.
- **BIG IDEA:** Apostasy persists with religion. For it is religion that apostasizes, not Christians. Its hallmarks are unmistakable. Worldly sorrow, behavior modification, and religious pluralism.
- (7) The road to apostasy is paved with resignation and religion. Both of which are seldom seen by their object. But, today is a good day...because detours abound in Jesus.

IV. APOSTASY ENDS WITH REPENTANCE (v15-17)

1. A Select Few

- (1) A faction who genuinely "put away" idols.
- **BIG IDEA:** Apostasy ends with genuine repentance. Repentance is opposed to resignation and religion.
- (2) The road to apostasy is paved with resignation and religion. Both of which are seldom seen by their object. But, today is a good day...because detours abound in Jesus.

