APOSTASY

The Mark of a Fake, False, or Former "Christian"

I. Understanding Apostasy

What is apostasy?

The abandonment or rejection of a faith one previously professed.

- A non-Christian is not necessarily an apostate.
- A struggling Christian is not necessarily an apostate.
- An apostate is someone who once professed faith, participated in the church, and later turned away from Christ and His teachings.

Biblical descriptions:

- "Fall away" — Hebrews 3:12; 6:4–6; 1 Timothy 4:1; Luke 8:13; Matthew 24:10
- "Turn back" — John 6:66
- "Not abide" — John 15:6

II. The Doctrinal Difference

Two theological perspectives on salvation and apostasy:

Free Will — Salvation Can Be Lost

- Believers have free will and can ultimately choose to walk away from their faith.

Reformed — Eternal Security

- Those who are genuinely born again will not ultimately fall away.
- Those who permanently abandon the faith demonstrate that they were never truly saved.

III. The Biblical Warnings

Scripture repeatedly warns believers about the danger of falling away.

- **1 Timothy 4:1** — Some will depart from the faith, following deceptive teachings.
- **Hebrews 3:12** — Guard against an unbelieving heart that turns away from God.
- **John 15:6** — The consequences of failing to abide in Christ.

- **Hebrews 6:4–8** — A serious warning about those who have experienced spiritual enlightenment and then fall away.

Three important truths:

1. Apostasy is real, and Scripture warns that it is coming.
2. We must guard our hearts against unbelief.
3. We are called to remain in Christ.

IV. The Divine Determination

John 6:39

- Jesus declares that He will lose none of those the Father has given Him.

Matthew 7:21–23

- Not everyone who professes to know Christ truly belongs to Him.
- Religious activity does not necessarily indicate a genuine relationship with Christ.

The central question: Is our faith merely an outward profession, or do we truly know Christ?

V. Our Response to Apostasy

1. Recognize the difference between profession and genuine faith.

1 John 2:19 — Those who permanently departed revealed that they were not truly part of the fellowship of believers.

2. Guard your heart against unbelief.

Hebrews 3:12 — Be careful not to develop a heart that turns away from the living God.

3. Encourage and strengthen one another.

Hebrews 10:24–25

- Stir one another toward love and good works.
- Continue meeting together.
- Encourage one another as the day of Christ's return approaches.

VI. Recognizing the Progression of Apostasy

Apostasy often develops gradually rather than suddenly.

1. **Withdrawal** — Participation and fellowship with other believers begin to decline.

2. **Spiritual neglect** — Seeking spiritual nourishment becomes less important.
3. **Worldly fulfillment** — Personal satisfaction is increasingly found in worldly pursuits.
4. **Desensitization** — Conviction over sin weakens, and sinful choices become easier to justify.
5. **Willful rejection** — Personal desires take precedence over God's will and calling.

Final Challenge

Apostasy is a serious biblical warning that calls for personal examination, spiritual vigilance, and perseverance.

Are we simply going through the motions of Christianity, or are we genuinely abiding in Christ?

Remain in Christ. Guard your heart. Encourage one another.