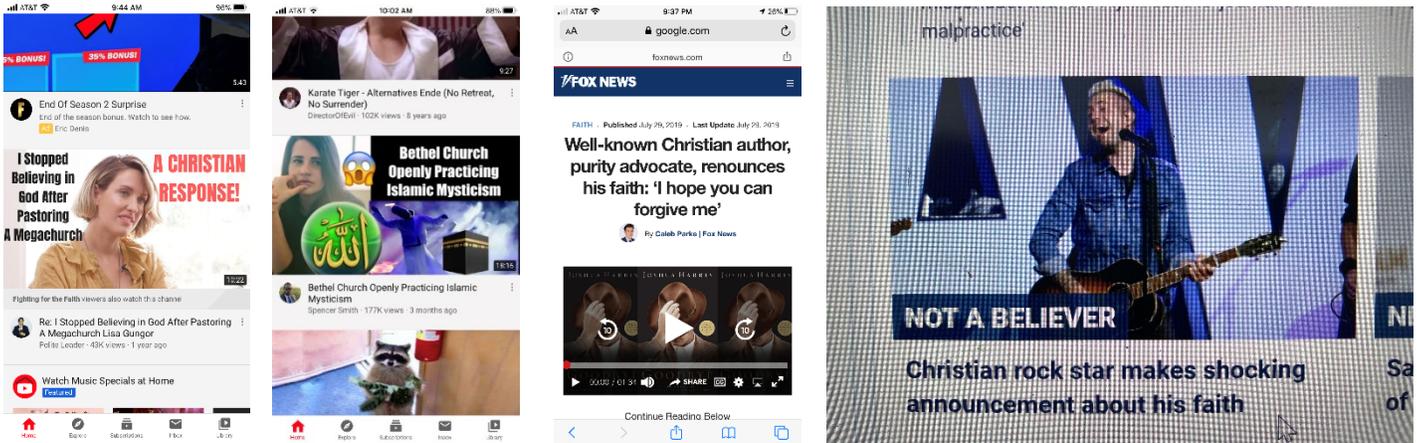


The Falling Away Is Now Paul R. Wild, May 28, 2020



¹ Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, ² That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. ³ Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a **falling away** [apostasy, Greek apostasia] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

According to Strong's concordance, apostasy is a defection or revolt and is derived from *aphístēmi*, meaning "leave" or "depart." *Aphístēmi* is derived from *apó*, meaning "away from," and *histēmi*, meaning "stand," or properly understood as a "departure" implying "desertion." Therefore, Strong's indicates that *apostasy* literally is "a leaving, from a previous standing."

There are those from the pre-Tribulation rapture fold who believe the apostasy of this verse is the rapture, suggesting that Christians are leaving, departing, or standing away from the earth, but that is bad exegesis. The other use of apostasy is in Acts 21:21, where the apostles and elders in Jerusalem explained to Paul that they had heard that Paul was teaching the Jews to "forsake [*apostasian*] Moses," meaning to forsake following the Law. The context of apostasy as it was used 2,000 years ago and as we use it today is to indicate when someone rejects a prior religious, political, or philosophical belief. When compared to other passages of Scripture, it is easy to see what Paul meant.

¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Matthew 24:12

¹ Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall **depart** [*aphistémi*; remember that word from above?] from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Timothy 4:1

¹This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ²For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ⁶For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ⁷Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. ¹³But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

2 Timothy 3:1-7,13

³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine [doctrine is a term for those claiming to be believers, for unbelievers don't care about doctrine]; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

2 Timothy 4:3

¹⁷But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; ¹⁸How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Jude 17-19

The falling away that Paul speaks of in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 is the apostasy of those who previously claimed to be Christians but now reject it, but he alludes to another type of falling away in 1 Timothy 4:1 and 2 Timothy 3:1-7,13, where they may appear to be Christians but are not. Both types can be seen in the news snippets shown above.

Some will say, "So what? There have always been apostates. The Church has always had to deal with this kind of stuff, so this doesn't mean the end is near." A friend of mine worked in the music ministry of a large church in Houston where the pastor declared to the whole congregation only a few years ago that he didn't think the prophecies of Revelation and the return of Jesus were anytime soon. What blindness and ignorance; such shepherds are exceptionally dangerous to the flock.

But there must be a time when these things will occur. When the signs of the times show three large, competing nations (US, Russia, China) armed to the teeth that match the symbolical beasts of Daniel 7; when the world is filled with wars and rumors of wars like no other time in history; when the technology exists to track every person on the planet; when paper money and coinage are rapidly becoming obsolete in favor of digital money; when pestilence (disease) is on the rise; when drug abuse (sorcery, as in Revelation 18:23, i.e., Greek *pharmakeia*) is rampant across the globe, and when the LGBTQ agenda is considered normative **all at the same time**, then Christians need to get past the mindset that these are just bumps in the road and all will get back to normal. Especially for those Christians

here in the US, the days of “this-is-the-United-States-and-really-bad-things-don’t-happen-here-for-long” should be long gone. Unfortunately, it is not.

Peter spoke to the mindset of those who ignore the signs of the times and scoff at the idea of soon-approaching judgment.

³Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, ⁴And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. ⁵For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: ⁶Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: ⁷But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

2 Peter 3:3-7

And where does Peter say that judgment will begin?

¹⁷For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

1 Peter 4:17

I am no prophet. As age creeps up on me, I can barely remember what I did yesterday much less predict what will happen tomorrow, but I can read my Bible. My Bible tells me that the Church is about to be taken to the woodshed so that the Father can provide His Son a Bride that is a virgin, spotless and unblemished.

⁷Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. ⁸And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Revelation 19:7-8

What does all this mean? The Church is not the wife arrayed in “fine linen, clean and white” but rather is soiled and corrupt. Many people presenting themselves as believers are not believers, and there are those who once claimed to be believers but now very publicly reject Jesus. This is what Scripture said would happen shortly before His return. My hope and prayer are that those in the audience who may still be on the fence regarding my messages to prepare for the coming judgment will get off the fence and recognize the need for urgent preparation. But in the midst of the preparation, take heart and remember:

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Luke 21:28