

Apostasy Or Endurance?

Intro: Mat. 24:9-13 ⁹Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. ¹¹And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ¹²And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Even as our text shows these events were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Nevertheless, we should not overlook the practical application of these principles to us.

1. The trials which tested the fidelity of God's children then likewise test us today.
2. The faith by which they overcame those trials is the same faith needed today to overcome the world; cf. 1 John 5:4 ⁴"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith."

I. JESUS TEACHES THAT APOSTASY IS POSSIBLE FOR CHRISTIANS.

A. Many scriptures emphasize this to be true.

1. 1 Cor. 10:12 ¹²"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
2. Gal. 5:4 ⁴"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
3. 2 Pet. 2:20 ²⁰"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

B. Not only does Jesus indicate apostasy to be possible, but He gives the reasons for the desertion of many.

C. False Doctrines.

1. Mat. 24:4, 11, 24 ⁴"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.... ¹¹And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.... ²⁴For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect."
2. Doctrines outside the church:
 - a. In the world
 - b. In denominations
3. This danger confronts us even today.
 - a. Acts 20:28-30 ²⁸"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. ²⁹For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."
 - b. Rom. 16:17-18 ¹⁷"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. ¹⁸For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - c. 2 Cor. 11:13 ¹³"For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."
 - d. Gal. 1:6-9 ⁶"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: ⁷Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. ⁹As we said before, so say I

now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

- e. 1 John 4:1 “¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”
4. False doctrines and teachers are even more abundant today, and though warned many are being carried away.
5. The Christian, therefore, must be rooted and grounded or be led astray.

D. Persecution.

1. Mat. 24:9-10 “⁹Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. ¹⁰ And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.”
 - a. 2 Tim. 3:12 “¹² Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”
 - b. The parable of the sower; Mat. 13:20-21 “²⁰ But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; ²¹ Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”
2. Our suffering today is not so much from physical persecution, but the problem is yet with us
 - a. 1 Pet. 4:4 “⁴ Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*.”
 - b. 1 Pet. 1:6-7 “⁶ Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: ⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”
 - c. 2 Cor. 12:10 “¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”
3. A strong faith in Him who works all things to our good is needed; Rom. 8:28 “²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.”

E. The Prevalence of Sin.

1. Mat. 24:12 “¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”
2. 2 Tim. 3:1-4 “¹ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;”
 - a. Today we live in the midst of: broken homes, the divorce evil, drunkenness, delinquency, wantonness, irreverence, etc., etc.
 - b. Christians do not let the torrents of sin sweep you away!

II. THUS, JESUS PLEAS FOR ENDURANCE.

A. Mat. 24:13 “¹³ But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

B. Many scriptures emphasize the need for endurance.

1. 1 Cor. 15:58 “⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
2. Rev. 2:10 “¹⁰ Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

C. The duration of endurance is stressed: “To the end.”

Conclusion: The result of endurance: “shall be saved.” Rom. 8:18 “¹⁸ For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”; 2 Cor. 4:17 “¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;”