

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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THE ROAD TO APOSTASY

Larry R. Ping II

The “Road to Apostasy” is laid with well-meaning, but unauthorized bricks. Apostasy is “the abandonment of one’s faith or religion.” It most usually happens on the individual level, but there are local bodies of God’s people who have, over the years, apostatized collectively. No one that I know sets out to abandon their faith. It occurs slowly, over-time, and to those not carefully watching, undetected until it is too late. There are signs one is on the “Road to Apostasy.” May we learn to recognize them early and rapidly exit. One is on the “Road to Apostasy” when...

1) He Disrespects The Authority Of God’s Word.

Jesus declared “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). If Christ has all power, or authority, we have none. This is why the apostle penned “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Col. 3:17). When one decides to do

things his way, not seeking authorization from God’s Word, he is well on his way down the “Road to Apostasy.”

2) He Is Drawn

Away. Paul warned about this very thing in Acts 20:30 when saying “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” When one allows himself to be “drawn away of his own lust” (Jam. 1:14), he is a step away from apostasy.

3) He Changes God’s Set-Up For Organization.

God declares the need for “elders in every church” (Acts 14:23). These men are to meet the standards set in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. God also affirms the need for deacons to serve the local body (I Tim. 3:8-13). When some, like Jeroboam of old (I Kings 13:26-33) change God’s set-up, apostasy is just around the corner. May we learn to appreciate and put into place God’s way of organization, leaving our ways behind.

4) He Speaks Where

The Bible Is Silent. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God” (I Pet. 4:11). From this may we realize, the silence of God is prohibitive, not permissive. Early leaders made a plea to the silence of God in Acts 15:24. Nadab and Abihu paid with their lives for abusing the silence of God (Lev. 10:1-2). May we not do the same.

5) He Agrees To Disagree.

Contrarily, God’s Word calls us to “speak the same thing” (I Cor. 1:10). When it comes to doctrinal matters, there is no room to “agree to disagree.” We are commanded to abide in “the doctrine of Christ” (II Jn. 9). Agreeing to disagree demonstrates a man’s unwillingness to study (II Tim. 2:15) and lack of love for mens’ souls (Rev. 3:19).

6) He Admits Worldliness Into His Life.

James admonishes a man must “keep himself unspotted from the world” (Jam. 1:27). One’s faith is threatened when this occurs, so do not let it in!

AND NOT...

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The phrase “and not” exists 78 times in the New Testament. From it we can glean many wonderful lessons. Would you consider these?

1) ***“Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily”*** (Matt. 1:19). The world needs more men like Jesus’ earthly father, who, even in a challenging circumstance, opted to be kind, generous and fair (Micah 6:8).

2) ***“And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell”*** (Matt. 5:29). Jesus calls for superior discipline with our eyes, through which the devil works expertly (I Jn. 2:16).

3) ***“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before***

God” (Lk. 12:6)? Oh, how much God loves and cares for us, His creation (Rom. 5:8)!

4) ***“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint”*** (Lk. 18:1). Prayer is a crucial cog in our ability to persevere, and not faint (I Thess. 5:17; Php. 4:6). Are you praying daily?

5) ***“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves”*** (Rom. 15:1). May we live in such a way we strive to do good for and help others (Php. 2:1-8).

6) ***“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to the law before the unjust, and not before the saints”*** (I Cor. 6:1)? Disagreements happen between members of God’s family. May we learn to resolve them with each other (Matt. 5:23-24).

7) ***“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the***

faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. 2:16). The Law of Moses is no longer in effect. Christ was the end of it (Rom. 10:4; Col. 2:14).

8) ***“But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you”*** (Gal. 4:18). We must always have a desire and zeal for God, no matter where we may be and no matter with whom we may be (Titus 2:14).

9) ***“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ”*** (Col. 2:8). May we be very careful to nourish ourselves through the sound words in God’s book (I Tim. 4:6). May we “hunger” and “thirst” after God’s righteousness (Matt. 5:6).

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY
Bible Study – 10:00 am
Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY
Bible Study – 7:00 pm