

The Road of Unfaithfulness

Introduction

Revelation 3:1-3

- 1. It is possible for congregations and individuals to conduct themselves in such a way that the Lord disowns them.**

Acts 8:22-23 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."

Revelation 2:4-5 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

- A. Leaving the Lord is not usually a thing that one does overnight.**
- B. It is such a gradual process that we sometimes do not even notice what is going on until we are far away from the Lord.**

Hebrews 2:1 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

- 2. There are at least three things that take place along the road of unfaithfulness to the Lord.**
 - A. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.**

Change in Attitude Toward Divine Authority

1. We are the followers of Jesus, who is both Christ and Lord.

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

2. He has the authority to command our obedience.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."

3. In becoming a Christian, we submit ourselves to Jesus' lordship. **Romans 6:16-18**

Colossians 2:6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

4. We are to treat with utmost reverence any aspect of His will – and put away any thought, word, and deed that does not meet with His approval. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

- A. Jesus placed great emphasis on the importance of the kind of attitude that “wants to do His will.”**

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

- B. If we ever cease to have that attitude, our “faith” has become no better than that of the devils.**

James 2:19-20

- 5. A heart that is unsubmitive before the will of God is an unfaithful heart before God Himself!**

Change in Practice

- 1. Who would have thought that Solomon’s attitude toward God would change so drastically that he would actually build places for the worship of idols?**

1 Kings 11:1-10

- 2. Yet the fact that a person or congregation is at one time doing what God instructs is no guarantee that will always be the case.**

- A. We can be sure, for example, that the church in Corinth did not at first do what they were doing with the Lord’s Supper.**

- 1) Somewhere along the way they changed their practice.**

1 Corinthians 11:17-22

- 3. The only way to remain obedient to God in our practice is to take our “bearings” off the fixed standard of God’s word – and not off other persons or congregations.**

2 Corinthians 10:12

Change in Terminology

- 1. Let us go back for a moment to the example of Solomon.**
 - A. It may be that he went to his grave still claiming to be a true worshiper of God.**

- 1) Just as Jeroboam may have presented his idolatrous plans to Israel as simply an "alternate" way of worshiping the true God.**

1 Kings 12:28 Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!"

- 2. No matter how radical the changes in our practices are, we often want to continue saying that we are still true to God's will and to continue to use terminology that reflects biblical teaching.**

Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

- 3. But eventually some reach the point where they are willing to dispense with even this effort and simply acknowledge that they do not believe one has to be bound by divine authority and scriptural teaching.**

- 4. Bold claims are sometimes made:**
 - A. That we do not need to have authority for what we do.**
 - B. That we are not “bound” by the New Testament.**
 - C. That we need a “new hermeneutic.” (way of interpreting)**
 - D. That the voice of the church is equal in authority to the voice of the Scriptures.**

- 5. This is usually the last thing to change when a person or congregation has left the Lord.**
 - A. It often takes many years, or even several generations for people to cease bothering even to profess to be doing what the Scriptures teach.**

Conclusion

1. **"Change in attitude toward divine authority"**
 - A. **Some in this stage erroneously think that because they have not actually done anything outwardly that is in violation of God's will.**
 - 1) **Believing they are still in a right relationship to Him.**
 - B. **Correct outward practice does not compensate for disloyal convictions.**
2. **"Change in practice"**
 - A. **These individuals erroneously think that because they are still calling their practices by terms that reflect biblical teaching that their practices must be in harmony with biblical teaching.**
3. **"Change in Terminology"**
 - A. **These are the ones who are willing to look at the situation as it really is. Dispensing with even the pretense of calling what they do biblical.**
 - 1) **They argue forthrightly for the viewpoint that we are not bound by the Scriptures.**
 - 2) **They can do whatever they choose to do in worship and service to God.**

4. **We are not talking about three stations on “the road to unfaithfulness” – but three stations along “the road of unfaithfulness.”**
5. **The person or congregation who has departed from a wholehearted allegiance to the authority of God has become unfaithful.**
 - A. **Whether he or it goes “any farther” or not.**
6. **The third station “change in terminology,” are most often reached by those in successive generations – a gradual but steady decline.**
7. **The cycle is not inevitable. What are WE doing to protect ourselves and our children?**

1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

8. **It is not enough at one time to have been loyal to the lordship of Christ.**

- A. **We must be “rooted and built up”**

Colossians 2:6-7 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

