

**Moral Failure**  
by Fred DeRuvo – Study-Grow-Know Ministries

The Bible speaks of a “falling away” that will occur during the end times and it would happen *prior* to the revealing or appearance of the Antichrist (“man of sin”). Paul speaks of this in 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

Many have discussed and even debated the meaning of this “falling away.” Some Bible translations use the phrase “the apostasy” or “the rebellion.” At one point, I used to think that this falling away spoken of in the Bible referenced *professing* Christians falling away from the faith. In doing more research on the matter, while I still believe that this is *part* of what constitutes the falling away, I no longer believe that it is the *complete* aspect of this falling away.

I believe that this falling away not only encompasses those who *profess* to know Jesus as Savior and Lord, but speaks of society as a whole that, while at one time had evidenced some form of adherence to biblical values, has grown to a point of having nothing to do with God. In essence then, the falling away – to my way of thinking – speaks of a much larger scale moral failure that permeates society as a whole and references society’s inability to maintain at least some semblance of *moral absolutes*.

I believe that this phenomenon began to take place on a large scale as the 1950s turned into the 1960s. There were a great many things happening in the world then and throughout the United States in particular. As society moved from one decade to the next, the changes that were taking place framed the way people thought, acted, and lived.

In fact, the change has been so dramatic that I believe it is impossible to go *backward*. It is, therefore, too late for society to return to a time of innocence and relative selflessness. Since things changed in the 1960s, people (and humanity as a whole) have become far more self-centered, rather than actively asking what they can do to *help* people improve by giving of themselves for that purpose.

While this book is *not* meant to be a detailed history of past decades, I have taken the time to highlight the events that I believe were catalysts in creating change within and throughout society. These changes have prompted us to become what is mirrored in civilization today.

In many ways, there is no going back. We have crossed the line and the structures, attitudes, and thinking that brought about this change have been in place for many generations. The changes themselves seemed to have become most obvious during the 1960s and ’70s.

In another book I wrote – *Living in the Last Generation* – I discuss why I believe we are that last generation before the physical return of Jesus Christ. Those reasons are discussed from a biblical perspective, citing Matthew 24 as the main text.

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In this book – *Falling Away* – I refer to the many secular changes throughout society that have created a new foundation upon which the world now moves, something that is seen as the *new* truth. One thing is important to remember, regardless of whether we are talking about biblical signs or secular changes: *God is fully in control*. He has never given up His sovereignty related to any portion of His Creation and never will.

What we view as human history is little more than seeing God’s hand from *our* perspective, though usually ignoring the fact that God has been involved. I pray that before you finish this book, you would come to recognize that God is King. God alone is sovereign, fully in control of all outcomes in order that the perfection of His will might be brought to bear on this universe.

In some ways, we are all players in His pageant. By His grace, we choose the side we are on: Satan’s or God’s. I pray that you have made the correct choice.

This series is about the great falling away that the apostle Paul warns of in 2 Thessalonians 2. He indicated this would occur as the world approached the *end* of the End Times (the times that began with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus). The world would essentially come to a point where it no longer wished to have anything to do with God and His standards.

I will admit that I used to think that phrase was fairly limited in scope, in that I felt Paul was mainly dealing with *Christendom* and the “falling away” that would occur within it from those who *profess* to be Christians but are not truly *authentic* Christians. These folks have not had the *spiritual transaction* that Jesus speaks of in John 3. It was there, in His conversation with Nicodemus, that Jesus pointed out that in order to gain eternal life, a person must be born again, or born from above.

This concept is certainly very important to grasp because in it, we find the very act and foundation that creates authentic Christianity within each true believer. Being a Christian is not simply following a set of rules, or even doing our best to love God above all things and our neighbors as we love ourselves. It is much more than that and I believe the truth is often missed by many today.

Certainly people like Brian McLaren, Rick Warren, Tony Campolo, and too many others to name here explain Christianity from a post-modern standpoint, often leaving out the very fact of what Jesus explained succinctly to Nicodemus. In order to gain eternal life, a person *must* be born again. That is the starting point. Our ability to love people – such as it is with a fallen nature – is *not* the start. The ability to truly love people comes *after* a person has been born again, not before.

Anyone can *appear* as though they love another person or people in general. The nature of such acts that *appear* loving can be so real that they even convince the person who is doing the alleged loving that they *are* real. God says our hearts are deceitfully wicked in Jeremiah

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17:9. Who among us can actually know the true condition of the heart? Of course, God knows. Anything done in the strength of *self* (no matter how real it may appear) will burn up in judgment, but things done in God's strength will remain (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:12-13).

As much as I believe that there is a problem within Christendom occurring these days – with many falling away from the truth – I no longer see that as the sole concern of Paul. It is *part* of it, yes, but not all of it.

Ever since I published a book called *The Anti-Supernatural Bias of Ex-Christians* back in 2009, I have realized that there is a growing group of people who firmly believe themselves to have *been* Christian (authentically) yet have walked away from the faith and no longer consider themselves to be Christian. In fact, many have settled in nicely (it would seem) under the category of either atheist or agnostic, but mostly atheist. This burgeoning group of individuals is certainly part of what the apostle Paul was referring to when he penned the words of 2 Thessalonians 2 a few thousand years ago.

My question is, how is it possible for a person who has allegedly become born again to then become “unborn again”? How is that possible? Once a person is born, they cannot be unborn. Death is not being unborn. It is the cessation of the life that once existed. A person who is truly born again, or born from above, remains that for all eternity.

I believe Paul was implying something far wider in scope than simply talking about those who professed to be Christians and then walked away completely. I now believe he was talking about a huge cultural shift that would take place worldwide in the End Times.

That's our show for today. Thanks for joining me as we begin this new series titled, “Falling Away.” Until we meet again, may the Lord open your eyes to show you how blessed you are in Him!