

"Many Will Fall Away"

Sane and Sensible Perspectives on the Last Days

Jesus prophesied that many believers would abandon the faith in the years leading up to His Return. Why would He say that? Why will so many fall away? Could it be that the pre-Tribulation Rapture expectation, so confidently proclaimed and so ardently, believed is setting Christians for a huge disappointment? This warning of Jesus comes right at the beginning of what He was saying that the Church needed to be prepared to endure. But suppose we aren't mentally and emotionally ready to endure the hardships He describes?



9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. 11 And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12 And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:9-14 ESV

The Parable of the Potsherds

Putting together the puzzle of the End Times can be compared to what archaeologists do. Having worked on four digs (two in England, two in Israel) I know the drill. First, the thousands of discovered pottery pieces have to be gathered, scrubbed clean and dried. Then, they are carefully examined by hand, checking for weight, thickness, texture, style and shape along with many other variables. All the while, the restorer is filing them away in a mental "catalogue" with all the other pieces. At some point, they can be culled into groups of similar pieces and further combed through to find the ones that most likely will fit together to re-form the broken vessel.

This restoration process always begins with individual pieces. In the same way, putting the End Times puzzle together means looking at each piece carefully, weighing it on its own merits and understanding it on its own terms. Leave all pre-conceived notions behind! No one knows what the pot will look like until the pot sherds begin to come together. In the same way, much foolishness results in looking at the scriptures through the lens of pre-conceived ideas.

I first looked upon the End Times with a prejudiced eye because when I was born again, everyone around me believed in the pre-tribulation rapture. It was only when someone from outside our group made me look at the individual pieces that I saw—lo and behold!—that none of them fit the cozy picture proclaimed to me. I am so glad that my eyes were opened then. It is one thing to wake up and see trouble coming from a distance. That way you can prepare. But



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woe to those who wake up in the midst of chaos! Sadly, Jesus may be warning us that this is exactly what will happen for some.

Why Many Will Fall

Right after describing the tribulation that is coming, Jesus warned that believers would be hated “by all nations” for His name’s sake. Throughout history the Church has experienced persecution, even death-dealing martyrdom. But this has always been limited in time and place. Only a few nations here and there at times have turned against Christian and Jewish believers. The coming persecution will be world-wide. “All nations” will turn against believers with a universal hatred for those who stand up for the Lord. At the heart of it, this is why this tribulation described by Jesus is said by Him to be the greatest that the world has ever seen. The persecution will evidently be so great that no one could be saved from it, unless for the elect’s sake “those days are shortened” (Matthew 24:22). It is the persecution, not just the chaotic times, that will make the coming tribulation truly terrible.

Is it any wonder that “many will fall away”? Just suppose that you have been trained to believe that you will never have to face persecution (or even chaotic times). Then, without warning you find yourself caught up in the very disasters you fully expected to avoid. Had you not been promised by an array of pastors and Bible teachers that you would be raptured out of here before times got too intense? Imagine what this would do to your faith. Think how tempted you would be to cast it all down. To never trust scripture again. To even doubt all you thought you knew about God. Nowadays, people fall away from faith due to the unexpected death of just one loved one. Imagine how great the falling away will be when millions are martyred.

The truth is that our loving, gracious and all-powerful Savior has allowed His Bride experience devastating times of persecution and unspeakable hardship throughout the entire history of the Church, as well as our Jewish kindred in faith. If Jesus were to rapture us out of harm’s way, He would have to apologize to countless millions of Christians who were asked by Him to be faithful in perfectly horrendous situations. What? Have we won some bizarre kind of spiritual lottery and are the only Christians in history to have a collective “get out of jail free” card? This is absurd. It would be laughable, if it weren’t setting so many sheep up for the slaughter of their faith.

Why Hearts Will Grow Cold

Jesus not only said that there would be a great falling away from the faith. He also warns us that lawlessness will increase and the “love of many will grow cold.” Certainly, those who fully let go of their faith will see their heart for God growing cold. Those two awful outcomes go hand in hand. But is that all that Jesus is alluding to? Might He not also be warning us that there is a direct connection between lawlessness and cold hearts? Isn’t it true that lawlessness often means people sinning against the innocent, not to persecute them (though it can mean that), but to oppress and mistreat them? How can we keep our hearts from growing cold if we are the ones being sinned against?

Only a clear-sighted realization of the times that are coming will make us fortify ourselves with mercy and forgiveness. Unless we have learned how to forgive the unforgiveable and show



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mercy to the merciless, our hearts will grow cold with hatred for the lawless ones. We need to get ready for the future now, by climbing up on the Mercy Seat with Jesus and learning His way of interceding for the ungodly. The ungodly are coming our way. This cannot be avoided! If we stick our heads in the sand, hoping the fable is true and that we will be whisked away without a worry, we will never do the homework needed now of learning how to live as Christians are meant to live: praying for those who despitely abuse us.¹

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.

Scriptures and Footnotes

¹ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
Matthew 5:10-12 ESV



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