

## APOSTASY IS A REALITY

Contrary to the doctrine of Calvinism, one can fall from the saved state after having become one of God's children. Peter wrote, "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. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (II Pet. 2:20-21). No more could be needed to prove the point than those two verses. Yet, there is more. The Hebrew writer says, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

After having spoken of how all will be judged in the last day by what they have done in this life, Paul said, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (II Cor. 5:11). The Hebrew writer says that those who willingly are disobedient to the Lord have "no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:26-27).

Knowing that one can fall, and then knowing the end for that person, it would do us well to guard against such happening to us. Therefore, let us consider two causes of such apostasy. First, there is the allurements of material things. In the parable of the soils, Jesus said that the seed that "fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Luke 8:14). Near the close of his life, Paul wrote, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world..." (II Tim. 4:10). Far too many brethren fall prey to this allurements. The second cause that we will mention is that of false teachers. After having told the Ephesian elders to take heed to themselves and all the flock, he said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). *Robert*

## "LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO"?

The above question is one asked by a devoted, dedicated, zealous and conscientious man of the Jewish religion. It was Saul of Tarsus, the very man that would later be known as the apostle Paul (Acts 9:6). Though Saul was already devoted to serving God, he found that he was in error concerning **how** to serve God. His desire to know the truth and his readiness to immediately make whatever changes were needed, serve as an inspired example of the attitude every man and woman must have in order to please God and ultimately obtain the coveted celestial home of the eternal soul, heaven.

For Saul, the answer to what the Lord would have him to do, was answered by instruction in becoming a child of God, a Christian. He was first told to go into the city of Damascus and he would there be told what he needed to do. In Damascus the Lord sent a disciple to teach Saul what he had to do. It has always been God's way and still is, for His word to be taught and those who obey it will be saved and those who disobey it will be lost (Mark 16:15). Saul was already a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, he already was penitent of his sins and he had already recognized Jesus as Lord, so what did the preacher tell him to do? "*Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts 22:16). Nothing has changed in the word of God from then to now. The same is required of us if we desire to have eternal life.

However, the need to be concerned with, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*", does not end at one's baptism. It needs to be our daily wake-up call, the central point in our daily lives, and the goal of our life. The conversion process is pictured as a "new birth" (John 3:3-5) and those who are born "again" are pictured as babes in Christ (I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14; I Cor. 3:1). We must then know, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*" **NOW**? The New Testament is replete with instructions for us **AS CHRISTIANS** (II Tim. 3:16-17). "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*" (II Cor. 5:17). We have a life to live as Christians! The only way to live such a life in a God pleasing way is to constantly ask the question, Lord, what will thou have me to do, **Today?**

If you have not been living in harmony with God's will, He wants you to come back **today!**

*Tilis*