

Mightier Than The Sword (Part One)

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A word rarely heard these days is quite important to this series. It is, "apostate." To the best of my knowledge, the term does not appear in the Bible. However the Bible does speak of apostates even though that specific term is not used.

The term has its roots in the Greek language, and if you would write "apostate" on a piece of paper right beside the word "apostle," you would see a clear relationship between the two. The main root of both words means "stand," as in what a statue does. The Statute of Liberty *stands* in New York City harbor.

However, there is a major difference between the two words. An "apostle" stands *for* and *acts in behalf of* another person, institution, or concept, whereas an "apostate" stands *away from* or *against* another person, institution, or concept.

Carrying the usage a bit further, an apostate is a person that at one time stood *for* and *with*, but as the course of life events arose, that person now no longer stands *with* but *away from* and *against* what he formerly stood *for*. In mankind's history, there have always been apostates.

In biblical history, I believe we can accurately determine that Adam and Eve were the first apostates. When they sinned, they relinquished their stand for God and chose to transfer their loyalty and stand away from God and to Satan.

In II Timothy 4:10, Paul remarks that his former companion, Demas, apostatized: "Has forsaken me, having loved this present world." That's very clear. Demas no longer stood with Paul in doing the work. In I John 2:19, John speaks of those who "went out from us but were not of us."

There is a second important factor I want you to understand. It is that I do not perceive the men I am going to name and give you a brief overview of their contributions, as apostatizing from true Christianity but rather from various forms of this world's versions of Christianity.

This is important because Jesus said the gates of the grave will not prevail against His church. Therefore, it has continued to exist right on to this present day virtually unseen. But the world has had many versions of false Christianity, all with some elements of God's truth but not enough to qualify them as the Israel of God.

I gave a series of sermons showing that this nation was founded on an unusually good foundation of biblical truth, but it still had an almost overwhelming number of false doctrines as well. The citizenry at that time generally had a much better knowledge of God's Word and attitudes towards God than is generally held today, but still, the citizens were not converted.

Since that time, beginning about 80-100 years ago, the level of apostasy from that false Christianity has been horrific, especially in the past 50 years. People, especially young adults, are departing from any recognition of church attendance as being a necessary part of life.

Britain's regular church attendance has declined in the past 100 years from 60% attending virtually every Sunday to today's level of 6%. In the past 40 years, America's regular attendance has declined from around 60% to today's level of about 30%. Apostasy is marching on.

Thus, the men whose teachings have proved to be mightier than the sword as a means of leading people into even greater spiritual apostasies through sin (and thus death) were themselves apostates from this world's false Christianity.

Recall that the spirit of the times we are living through did not develop overnight. It has taken hundreds of years for the technology of the end times to be developed and the attitudes and conduct of the people of the Western world to be morphed into the way things are today.

The men I will focus on were major leaders in the development of the spirit of the times we live in. Though born into Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish families, they gradually departed in both thought and conduct from what they received from their families and scholastic educations.

Here is an important question: Do you understand in simple, concrete and true terms what the heart of the end-time battles is all about? In order to be both accurate and true to the Scriptures, the answer is clear. In order to arrive at it, all we have to do is go back to what God reveals precipitated all of this turmoil.

Satan exclaimed that he will be the Most High (Isaiah 14:14). He challenged God even before the creation of mankind. He lost that challenge, but God continued on with His creation of man. Now all of us are involved in the final battles of this issue. *The issue is over who will be God.* That is simple; it is clear; and it is true.

We must prove during our lifetime that we will be loyal to our Creator God. Do we believe our Creator is the ultimate authority in truth, the ultimate authority in reality, the ultimate authority in law, the ultimate source of salvation? Will we ensure He will be the center of our life?

We have got to show God we believe these things by the way we live during what the Bible clearly show to be the most difficult time of worldwide testing in mankind's existence, at a time when all the forces of deceptive spiritual, mental, and physical powers can be brought to bear against these beliefs so we will break our loyalty to Him and apostatize.

The true Christian believes that the Creator God initiated and continues to uphold all things in His creation by the word of His power; that He, alone along with our Savior who has been with Him from before the foundation of this creation, is absolutely sovereign over everything pertaining to life and breath and His purpose and plan for our salvation.

I have many times warned against humanism in these commentaries because it is a major weapon against us in this spiritual warfare. Humanism is the title given to help us grasp that it is Satan's major religion which, with his

invisible assistance, he is using to badger mankind into believing that *they* are god—that they are fully capable of living apart from God’s direction.

The first apostate we are going to briefly consider is one you may have never even heard of. This is partly because he lived so long ago, but he is to this day important to us because he laid some of the more important planks in the philosophical foundation of the modern university.

He was a Roman Catholic theologian—in fact, a highly respected priest who wrote persuasively supporting what has come to be called humanism. He was born in AD 1225; he died in AD 1274. His name was Thomas Aquinas.