

THE CORNERSTONE

June 2016

Concentrate on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, who will go with you as you approach an obstacle, and you'll overcome it every time.

Ed Carpenter—A Closer Walk.



Monday June 6, 2016 -
Friday June 10, 2016
9:00 am-12:30 pm
Sugar Land Bible
Church*
401 Matlage Way
Sugar Land, Tx

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Vacation Bible School The Brightest Week of the Summer!



- J New friends J Amazing experiments
- J Spelunker Sports J Lip-smacking snacks
- J Surprising adventures J Incredible music



• *For More Information contact the Church at: 281-491-7773—www.slbc.org



Second Mile is seeking a part-time warehouse assistant.

This person will greet people donating items, assist with unloading, sort donations and maintain the warehouse area. To apply, please send your resume to Shane Hill at shill@secondmile.org.

[Email Your Resume](#)

WE HELP PEOPLE.

Second Mile began in 1990 when a concerned group of men and women saw the need in the community and felt compelled to respond. Then, in 2002, Second Mile became an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit supported by grants, organizations and individuals throughout the area.

Our mission is to love our neighbors by meeting their physical needs and equipping them for a responsible life in Christ.

We provide food, counseling and [health care](#) to needy residents of Fort Bend County. We also work with local churches, organizations and individuals to offer special programs such as a Christmas Toy Store and school supply drive. From time to time as funds are available, we provide financial assistance.

Our Discipleship Team visits neighbors at home when possible and meets regularly with neighbors in Fresno and 5th Street. We're also getting to know our Wednesday Friends, who live on the streets (for now) and come to Second Mile each week.

We believe no one is simply "homeless" or "poor." We all have strengths and the capacity to be leaders. At Second Mile, we believe in empowering those in need, helping them see their self-worth, and walking with them through their struggles.

[Board of Directors & Staff](#)

Second Mile is in need of food pantry volunteers and resale store volunteers from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays. Please contact Sheena Abraham at (281) 261-9199 ext. 213.

Thank you!

Sheena Abraham



Andy Woods—Pastor

THE LAST DAYS' APOSTASY OF THE CHURCH (Part 3)

Apostasy is an important yet often neglected subject when attempting to comprehend what the Bible teaches about the end times. Thus, this series of articles is dedicated toward tracing ten general, biblical characteristics of apostasy. In the previous articles, apostasy was defined as a movement within Christ's church representing a departure from known truth. It was also established that apostasy is the central sign revealed in Scripture signaling the near completion of the church's earthly mission. It was also shown that warnings against apostasy consume much of the New Testament and that these New Testament warnings relate to virtually all of Christianity's most cherished doctrines. Apostasy is also a phenomenon that occurs internally within the church and even is led by individuals or groups considered the least likely candidates to depart from truth. This article will attempt to develop two more characteristics of apostasy: its speed and satanic influence.

Apostasy Can Happen Quickly

Another characteristic of apostasy is the speed or haste in which it can transpire. Apostasy need not take several generations to occur. Galatians 1:6 says, "I *marvel* that you are turning away so *soon* from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a *different gospel*" (italics added). When Paul wrote to the Galatians, he expressed shock or surprise on two grounds. First, he was astonished at how quickly his readers had deserted the truth that he had imparted to them. Second, he was amazed that the Galatians had parted company with him on the very gospel itself. They did not disagree with Paul on some tangential or minor issue but rather on the core nature of the gospel, which represents the heart of Christianity.

A natural question arises. How long of a period of time elapsed in between Paul's initial contact with the Galatians and when Paul addressed them in his letter? Most modern New Testament scholars hold to what is called the Southern Galatian Theory. According to this view, Paul evangelized and planted churches within the area of Southern Galatia (modern-day Turkey) on his first missionary journey around A.D. 48. He then wrote to these same churches upon his return to Syrian Antioch after the conclusion of his first missionary journey. Therefore, Paul wrote to these same churches about one year after his original contact with them. Paul penned the letter out of concern that the new Galatian believers had shifted theologically. Although they had experienced salvation through faith alone in Christ alone, they had begun to embrace the false teachings of the Judaizers that sanctification could be achieved through a mixture of faith in addition to obedience to the Mosaic Law (Gal. 3:3). Paul spends the entire letter to the Galatians seeking to rescue them from this error. The important point to recognize here is that the very churches that had heard Paul preach and even saw his miracles (Gal. 3:5; Acts 14:3, 8-11) had departed dramatically from critical Pauline gospel principles within a short duration of time consisting of about one year. Thus, the speed at which apostasy can occur cannot be overstated.

In the previous article, reference was made to the golden calf incident (Exod. 32:1-10). There, Israel while encamped at the base of Mount Sinai apostatized from God at the very moment Moses was atop Mount Sinai receiving God's Law. As in the case of the Galatians, this turning away from God did not represent a departure over some minor issue. Rather, it represented apostasy from the fundamental issue of monotheism. When God brought this issue to the attention of Moses on Sinai, He made reference to the speed at which Israel had apostatized. Exodus 32:8 says, "They have turned aside *quickly* out of the way which I have commanded them" (italics added). Apparently, Moses had been on Sinai for only 40-days (Exod. 24:18) and it was during this short time period that Israel apostatized on the fundamental issue of the true knowledge of God. Again, the speed at which apostasy can occur should be noted. While it took the Galatians about a year to depart from the core principles of the gospel, it took Israel only 40 days to depart from God by lapsing into idolatry.

The speed in which apostasy can take place also finds illustration in Christ's words to the church at Ephesus. The previous article noted Christ's rebuke to the Ephesian church, which had forsaken its first love (Rev. 2:4-5). Again, the foundational nature of this departure deserves notice. Like the Galatians who had left the core principles of the gospel and Israel who had forsaken monotheism, the Ephesians had allowed other pursuits to eclipse their initial love and devotion to Christ. Interestingly, Paul had earlier addressed the church at Ephesus around A.D. 60. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians was written from Rome during his first Roman imprisonment and constituted the first of his four "prison letters." The letter to the Ephesians fails to reveal any clue of a major defection taking place within the church. Yet when Christ addressed the same church in Rev. 2:1-7, the church looked entirely different since it had abandoned its first love. While, as mentioned above, Paul wrote to the Ephesians in A.D. 60, it is traditionally believed that John on Patmos received and recorded the vision that subsequently became known as the Book of Revelation in A.D. 95. Thus, within just three and a half decades (from A.D. 60 to A.D. 95), the church at Ephesus had departed on the foundational issue of love and devotion to Christ. In sum, while it took the Galatians one year to abandon the gospel and Israel 40 days to abandon monotheism, it took Ephesus less



than four decades to neglect its first love. All of these biblical examples illustrate the speed in which apostasy can occur.

The rapid speed in which apostasy can occur was first driven home to me as a new believer. I became a Christian in 1983 through a home Bible study affiliated with a Bible teaching church. This wonderful church then nourished me in my newfound relationship with Christ during most of my high school years. I then temporarily left the church for a few years in order to attend college and graduate school in another area. Upon my return to the church just a few years later, I found an entirely different church due to an interim change in ministry philosophy. No longer was the Bible taught except in a highly selective fashion. Concepts such as the realities of sin, hell, and the exclusivity and blood of Christ were omitted from the church's teaching ministry all in the name of not wanting to offend the unchurched. God used this experience to open my eyes not only to the reality of apostasy but also to the speed in which it can occur even in spiritual environments once considered fundamental and secure.

Apostasy is Satanically Energized

Who ultimately is behind apostasy? The following verses divulge Satan as the true culprit. 2 Corinthians 11:3 says, "But I fear, lest somehow, as the *serpent* deceived Eve by his own craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (italics added). Here, Paul expresses concern that just as Satan led Eve away from God's simple command not to eat from the forbidden tree, Satan might similarly lead the Corinthians into apostasy. 1 Timothy 4:1 similarly notes, "Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith giving heed to *deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons*" (italics added). The adverb "expressly" indicates the Spirit's earnest desire to convey an important truth. This important spiritual reality is that demons are the ultimate source of power behind the last days apostasy of the church.

Do men or Satan cause apostasy? The answer to this question is "yes" since both alternatives are true. Satan places ideas into the minds of fallen men typically in positions of ecclesiastical influence in order to push the church further into apostasy. Satan even uses believers in order to accomplish this endeavor. Satan's ability to use carnal believers, or those who cater to their sin nature, is apparent from the following passages. Christ rebuked Peter for giving verbal expressions to satanic thoughts. Christ's rebuke occurred when Peter attempted to persuade Christ not to die on the cross (Matt. 16:23). Later, Peter noted that Satan had filled the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira thereby prompting them to lie to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). It seems evident that Ananias and Sapphira were believers since their sudden deaths struck fear into the hearts of the rest of the church (Acts 5:11). Such fear probably would not have overtaken the church had Ananias and Sapphira been unbelievers. The early church likely reasoned that if two of their own could be severely disciplined by God then the rest of the church could be similarly disciplined. Also, Paul exhorted the Ephesian believers not to harbor bitterness and instead to forgive. Otherwise they would give Satan a place of influence in their lives (Eph. 4:26-27). Thus, these passages all seem to indicate that Satan has an ability to negatively influence the lives of carnal believers.

Why would Satan want to use Christians in spheres of influence within the church to cause the church to depart from truth? Satan's ambition has always been to push the church into apostasy so as to get it off message and outside of her divine purpose. Once the church becomes something that God never intended she quickly loses her effectiveness in the world. God's purpose for the church is threefold: to glorify God (Eph. 3:21), to edify the saints (Eph. 4:11-16), and to accomplish worldwide evangelization and disciple making (Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20). The church operates with power only to the extent that she functions within her divine design. Once the church moves outside of these divinely designed guidelines she loses her power and effectiveness. This reality explains why Satan is the ultimate cause of apostasy. If Satan through apostasy can cause the church to take on tasks that God never delegated to her or become something that God never designed her to be then he will have crippled the church in accomplishing her earthly mission.

(To Be Continued...)

Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians represent Paul's prison letters.

For a defense of Revelation's A.D. 95 date, see Mark Hitchcock, "A Defense of the Domitianic Date of the Book of Revelation" (Ph.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2005).

True Worship will give you the kind of spiritual strength that will help you carry the burden and fight the battle. 2 Cor. 12:9

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Ed Carpenter—A Closer Walk



Summer Sunday School

June 5, 2016

Beginning in June 5, 2016 Pastor Andy Woods will be teaching Sunday morning Sunday School at Sugar Land Bible Church for the Summer quarter. The focus of this class will be on "Soteriology," which is otherwise known as the "Doctrine of Salvation." This class will be a completion of what he has been teaching Wednesday evenings during the Spring quarter. Since everything in this class will be taught at an introductory level, it is ***not*** necessary to have attended the Wednesday series in order to attend and benefit on Sunday mornings. Of all of the topics discussed in the Bible, this subject of Salvation is perhaps the most paramount from the human viewpoint since a correct understanding of its contents determines where we spend eternity (Gal. 1:6-9). The material for this teaching will be taken from a class that Pastor Andy regularly teaches at the College Of Biblical Studies entitled "Man, Sin, Salvation." The material covered in this class will include the definition of salvation, election versus free will, the atonement, salvation words, God's one condition of salvation, eternal security, the results of salvation, and the false views of salvation. Many subtopics will be explored under each of these major headings such as Lordship Salvation, Calvinism versus Arminianism, Inclusivism and Universalism, the possibility of carnal Christianity, the doctrine of rewards, and the three tenses of salvation, etc... The format will proceed a little differently than what folks may be used to. First, we will be doing our teaching in the sanctuary. Second, the sessions will be videotaped and archived for the benefit of our missionaries who sometimes need theological guidance in certain areas. Third, the basic format will include a brief time of prayer and then teaching from 9:45 to 10:35AM, which will be followed by questions and answers from 10:35 to 10:45 AM. The class will conclude sharply at 10:45AM so as to allow ample time to prepare for our morning worship service, which will begin at 11:00 AM sharp. We are excited to be offering this new class for the benefit of the saints at Sugar Land Bible Church. We hope and pray that many will take advantage of it. We are looking forward to what God will do through these sessions of study in "His Word."

Scripture for the Month: Deuteronomy 29:29



"The secret *things* belong to the Lord our God, but those *things* which are revealed belong to us and to our chil-



7th Annual Fort Bend Empty Bowls - THANK YOU!

Empty Bowls was a great success. Thanks to you all for your help. Whether you were a sponsor, advertiser, volunteer, donor or guest, you helped us have our most successful event yet. We were able to raise a net \$104,000 for the Ministry.

With **91 cents of every dollar going directly to our client programs**, the money raised will go a LONG way to help those in temporary financial crisis in East Fort Bend County.

WE DID IT WITH YOUR HELP! We'll see you at the next event.



**benefiting East Fort Bend
Human Needs Ministry**

Summer Volunteer Needs

Looking for a volunteer opportunity for the summer? See the list below and contact Jordan Keyes, at jordan@humanneeds.org if you are interested in filling any of these. We'd love to have you!



Food Pantry:

- **Food Order Helpers:** responsible for preparing food orders for clients
 - Mondays from 6pm-8pm
 - Every other Wednesday from 6pm-8pm
 - 1 Friday a month from 10am-1:30pm
- **Food Pantry Screeners:** responsible for interviewing clients face-to-face and inputting their information into a computer database
 - Mondays from 6pm-8pm

Substitutes: We are also looking for volunteers to be placed on our substitute list for day and/or evening. The ideal volunteer is someone with a relatively flexible schedule who can be called with just a few days notice to come volunteer. Potential times are: M/W from 6pm-8pm or Tu/Th/F from 10am-1:30pm. Training will be provided.

- **Warehouse Helpers:** responsible for lifting and loading 30-50 lb boxes into truck
 - Thursday from 10-11 am
 - Friday from 9-10 am

Resale Shop:

- Price Tagging, Donation Sorting and/or Customer Assistance
 - M/Tu/Th/F/S, 10am-4pm (for any amount of time during that time-frame)



HOW TO WATCH SLBC VIDEOS ON THE INTERNET

It will soon be two years since SLBC started webcasting (live streaming) sermons and other sessions in the auditorium and making video content available for watching on computers, tablets, and Smart devices such as mobile phones and televisions. As of 8 May 2016, SLBC has archived 126 videos. The total number of video downloads since July 2014 is approaching 19,000. The total number of audio (mp3) downloads since that time is nearly 11,000. Total audio and video downloads are about 29,000, which include 24,000 in the U.S. and about 5,000 internationally from 86 different countries. Concurrent connections (those that stay connected) to our Sunday sermon webcasts have increased from about 4 when we started in July 2014 to more than 20 in 2016. If you consider that many webcast connections have more than one person who watches, then it is evident that the online audience has become significant. Many of you are able to connect with SLBC and watch the live webcast when you are ill or out of town. And many more are able to go back and watch or listen later. This convenience reduces the load on our CD and DVD duplication requirements and is reaching viewers and listeners across the U.S. and the world. Thank you for your prayers and support for this valuable ministry, for the audio, video, and CD/DVD volunteers, and for our content delivery partner Sermon Audio.

So what if you don't watch or listen on the web because you just don't know much about it? If you can get connected to the internet (or a cell phone tower), you probably have the right stuff to directly access the SLBC A/V resources. Audio and video content can be accessed using computers, tablets, Smart televisions, and Smart phones. The first place for access is SLBC's website, www.slbc.org. The Sermon Archives page has a complete inventory of all recorded sermons (and certain special sessions). Videos started in July 2014 and audio many years before that. Secondly, you can go to www.sermonaudio.com and find SLBC by searching using *Sugar Land*. And you can set the page for My Church in the upper left of the page using the key word *sugarlandbible*. You can watch or Sermon Audio at regular speed (1000 kbps) with a good internet connection, or at a slower speed (150 kbps) for poorer connections after clicking on the session you want. Or you can download the mp4 video or mp3 audio on your device to watch later. Lastly, there is a Sermon Audio app that you can download and install from the Apple App Store or the Android Play Store. The apps are convenient, but may have a few less options than access to Sermon Audio through a browser.

At home or on the road, you may wish to watch on a large television screen from the comfort of your sofa or easy chair. If you have good internet speed and wireless signal strength you may opt to view using one of several accessory devices. These include devices by Google Chromecast, Amazon Fire, Apple TV, Roku, and perhaps even certain gaming consoles such as Xbox and PlayStation. Since HDMI input has become the current audio/video input standard for consumers, all new TVs have HDMI input ports. HDMI offers the convenience of audio and video signals using a single plug. Only certain new accessory devices still have conventional composite output connections (red, yellow, white) and all should have HDMI output ports. Sermon Audio has a channel for Roku devices, which eliminates the requirement to "cast", "fling", or "mirror" videos from a computer, tablet, or smart phone to the device when using the Sermon Audio channel. The fourth generation Apple TV device has the capability to load apps on the device just like you can do with an iPhone or an iPad. As accessory devices continue to improve, we should expect Chromecast and Amazon Fire devices to also connect to Sermon Audio without having to cast or fling to their devices. To learn how to use the Sermon Audio channel on Roku devices, read the attached file, *Streaming with Roku*.

The Cornerstone Newsletter deadline for News articles is the 19th of each month. You can e-mail Patricia Chandler at:

earlbudc@att.net or send information to Carol Henry at Carol@SLBC.org