Drifting

Intro: Brother J. D. Tant made the statement that has become well-known through the years: “Brethren, we are drifting.” He lived from 1861 to 1941. If he had lived longer, there is no telling what he would say now for we have drifted much farther away from where we were at that time.

I. **Bible Warnings**

A. The Bible has repeatedly warned us of apostasy.

B. The Old Testament is replete with examples of it.

1. God showed how to determine if one was a false prophet; Deut. 18:20-22 “But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. 21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? 22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”

2. The first generation that came out of Egypt.

3. During the period of the judges we see continued apostasy.

4. During the period of the kings the apostasy was so bad God carried them away into captivity.


1. Matt. 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

2. Acts 20:28-31 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

3. 1 Tim. 4:1-2 “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;”

4. 2 Pet. 2:1-2 “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”

5. 1 John 4:1 “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

6. Jude 4 “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

7. To the church in Ephesus; Rev. 2:2 “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:”

8. Elders are given the charge to stop their mouths; Tit. 1:9-11 “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. 10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: 11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.”
D. 1 Cor. 11:19 “For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”

II. A Very Brief History of Modern Problem
   A. Bitter division had weakened the church over church cooperation and support of orphan’s homes.
      1. These centered on Herald of Truth and Boles Home.
      2. The time of these controversies were the 1950s with eventually the groups withdrawing fellowship from each other and going their separate ways.
   B. Explosive growth in in 1950s and 1960s:
      1. At one time it was said we were the fastest growing religious group in the United States.
      2. Many of these converts were not truly grounded in the faith.
      3. Emphasis often centered upon filling up the building and numbers.
   C. Growth of worldliness and materialism:
      1. The world and its influence crept into the church.
      2. Few sought a “thus saith the Lord” for how they lived.
      3. There was the growth of affluent congregations.
   D. Less emphasis on doctrinal preaching:
      1. Less emphasis was placed on God’s Word.
      2. More emphasis was placed on social affairs.
      3. There was the emphasis on not to offend anyone.

III. Some of the Controversies
   A. Charismatic Movement/Holy Spirit abuses:
      1. This movement spread through many religious bodies beginning in the 1960s.
      2. It was rooted in the old Pentecostal/Holiness movement, but initially identified with the “Jesus Movement” of the Hippie counterculture.
      3. The stress was on subjectivism and emotionalism.
      4. This movement made its way into the church.
   B. Socializing the Gospel:
      1. Forgetting about the Biblical work of the church: saving souls through
         a. Preaching to the lost
         b. Edifying the saved
         c. Benevolence
      2. Turned to social programs, entertainment, and recreation.
      3. Provide whatever people want.
   C. There are additional controversies:
      1. Marriage Divorce Remarriage:
      2. Crossroads/Boston movement:
      3. Theistic evolution:
      4. Realized Eschatology/AD 70/Kingism heresy:
      5. Along with a host of others.

Conclusion: We must ever be on guard lest we slip away; Heb. 2:1 “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip [lest we drift away—NKJV].”