Why Do Christians Fall Away?

Intro: It is thrilling to see someone obey the gospel. Those people are rewarded with having their sins washed away by Christ blood. They receive blessings from a loving heaven Father with His promise to be with them. God expects them to be faithful and loyal to Him and His Word. It is hard to believe that some, once receiving God’s blessings, would fall away and return to the pollutions of this world (2 Pet. 2:20 “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.”) Why would a Christian fall away? What are some of the reasons? Let us study this with a view of not making the same tragic mistakes.

I. They Were Never Sufficiently Taught God’s Word.
   A. Christianity is a taught and learned religion.
      1. Mat. 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
      2. John 6:45 “It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”
      3. Rom. 10:17 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
   B. Some have never been rooted in God’s Word.
      1. The parable of the sower.
         a. Mat. 13:5-6 “Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.”
         b. Jesus explains this as: Mat. 13:20-21 “But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”
         c. They obey God’s Word but do not come to fully understand it.
      2. Some were not taught properly.
         a. Some, today, simply are teaching false doctrines concerning salvation.
         b. Some make a response solely on emotions without knowing God’s Word.
         c. Often, we are so eager to get someone in the water, we do not teach them adequately.
      3. Some neglected to study God’s Word.
         a. 2 Tim. 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
         b. They simply do not put the time in, or allow other things to crowd out studying the Bible.
      4. Thus, when things come up because they have no root they quit the church.
II. **THEY ARE INFLUENCED BY THE WORLD.**

A. Those who are engaged in error are going to try to get others to join them.

1. People always influence others.
   a. Rom. 14:7 “For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.”
   b. We can influence them for good, or be influenced for evil.
      (1) 1 Tim. 4:12 “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the
          believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
      (2) 1 Cor. 15:33 “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”

2. They might try to influence us in different ways.
   a. Some might mock and ridicule.
   b. Others will tempt them to join in with their practices. (peer pressure)

B. **They never died to the world.**

1. Parable of the sower.
   a. Mat. 13:7 “And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked
      them:”
   b. Jesus explanation: Matt. 13:22 “He also that received seed among the thorns
      is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches,
      choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”

2. Jam. 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world
   is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

3. Rom. 8:13 “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do
   mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

C. **We must die, separate ourselves from the world.**

1. Col. 3:5 “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication,
   uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:”

2. 2 Cor. 6:17-18 “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the
   Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18And will be a Father unto
   you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

3. We must put our affections on God:
   a. Col. 3:1 “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where
      Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”
   b. 1 John 2:15-17 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any
      man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16For all that is in the world,
      the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father,
      but is of the world. 17And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that
      doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”
   c. Rom. 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the
      renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and
      perfect, will of God.”

III. **THEY ARE DECEIVED AND LED AWAY INTO ERROR.**

A. **There is much religious error in the world today.**

1. Salvation by grace only.
2. Salvation by faith only.
3. One church is as good as another, or join the church of your choice.
4. One will be saved as long as he is sincere.

**B. There is even error within the Lord’s church.**
1. The doctrines taught in the religious world soon make their way into the church.
   a. Saved by grace alone, or an umbrella of grace.
   b. There is no law, grace excludes law.
2. Social and political emphasis of the church.
3. The felt-needs syndrome.
4. Theist evolution.
5. Unity in diversity, and thus fellowship with the denominations.
6. Use of Instrumental music.
7. The church’s role to entertain us.
8. Divorce and remarriage errors.
9. There are always some who will rise up to teach some new doctrine.

**C. This is why we are urged to beware.**
1. Mat. 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”
2. Acts 20:28-30 “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. 29For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”
3. Eph. 5:6 “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”
4. 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.”

**IV. Those who quit because of envy, jealously, and not being able to have their own way about something.**

**A. These are usually petty things but because of pride it causes some to fall away.**

**B. This is why we are warned against pride.**
1. Pro. 11:2 “When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.”
2. Pro. 16:18 “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
3. Jam. 4:6 “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”

**C. The proper attitude one toward another would solve this problem.**
1. Rom. 12:15-16 “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 15Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.”
2. Phi. 2:3-4 “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 3Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”
V. THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN OFFENDED BY SOME PETTY SUPPOSED INJUSTICE.

A. There are some people who wear their feelings on their shoulder.
   1. They are just waiting for someone to say something or do something.
   2. When something happens they get mad and leave.

B. While I am not advocating that we intentionally offend someone, we all will.
   1. One person’s personality will conflict with another’s.
   2. One will do something that someone else does not like, oftentimes without thinking about it or knowing about it.

C. 1 Pet. 4:8 “And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”
   1. True Christian love (ἀγάπη) will continue.
   2. True love will not be affected by someone’s faults, imperfections, and weaknesses, but will continue in spite of these things.
   3. 1 Cor. 13:4 “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,” Patience will cause one to overlook some things.

D. When someone does offend us we have the responsibility to go to that person.
   1. Mat. 18:15 “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”
   2. Luke 17:1-4 “Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! 2It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. 3Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. 4And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.” These are true stumblingblocks, not just a petty injustice.

Conclusion: There is no reason that is justified for falling away from Christ. In leaving the Lord they leave all the blessings that flow from Him and they give up any hope of eternal life with God. Truly their last state is worse than the beginning.