Why Some Are Leaving The Church Of Christ?

Intro: Without fear of argumentation, we can state that some are leaving the Lord’s church. Some are going into denominationalism while others are becoming totally non-religious. With a proper realization of the blessings available to and waiting for those who are faithful, why would anyone leave the church?

I. LACK OF LOVE FOR GOD.
   A. Mat. 22:37 “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”
   B. If we love God first and foremost in our lives, we will never forsake the church
      1. Mat. 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”
      2. 2 Cor. 5:14 “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:”
      3. We will keep His commandments:
         a. John 14:15 “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”
         b. 1 John 5:3 “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”
   C. When we love God, nothing will stand in our way of faithfulness to Him.

II. FALSE TEACHING.
   A. There will be false teachers.
      1. Mat. 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”
      2. Acts 20:29-30 “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.”
      3. Col. 2:4 “And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.”
   B. False teaching does lead others astray.
      1. Rom. 16:17-18 “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”
      2. 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. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”
   C. There are many false doctrines taught by those in the church today which cause some to leave the Lord’s church.
   D. There are even more false doctrines in the world which cause some to apostatize
      1. From the world (Humanism, Evolution, Atheism and Agnosticism, Hedonism, Feminism, etc.).
      2. From Denominationalism (Pluralism, Pentecostalism and Holy Spirit doctrines, Premillennialism, etc.).
III. **The Demands Are Too Great.**

A. **Jesus makes certain demands for those who are Christians.**
   1. Mat. 16:24 "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."
   2. Mat. 16:26 "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
   3. Luke 9:62 "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

B. **Truth often drives some away.**
   1. Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage.
      a. God’s design is one man for one woman for life.
      b. God allows one exception: fornication.
      c. Those divorced for some cause other than fornication and remarry are committing adultery and must get out of that adultery to be saved.
   2. Sin to drink alcohol in any amount.
   3. It is sinful to dance.
   4. The pure speech which is to characterize Christians.
   5. Not just things we are not to do, but also things we must do:
      a. God expects us to be actively involved in the work of the church.
      b. Attending all the services of the church.
      c. Teaching others the Gospel.

IV. **Worldliness and Materialism.**

A. **Period of Judges.**
   1. Every time the people had peace and prosperity they fell away from God.

B. **The Bible warns about riches.**
   1. Mat. 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
   2. Mat. 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.”
   3. Luke 18:24-25 “And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”
   4. 1 Tim. 6:9-10 “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

C. **Our nation:**
   1. We have become rich and increased with goods.
   2. As a result, our nation no longer thinks they have any need of God.
   3. We seek more and more of this world’s goods.
      a. Jesus warned; Luke 12:15 “And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”
b. To the Laodiceans; Rev. 3:17 “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”

4. We have lost sight of what is really important.
   a. Mat. 16:26 “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
   b. Luke 12:18-21 “And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

V. **DESIRE TO BE LIKE OTHERS.**

A. In the long ago Israel wanted a king to reign over them.
   1. 1 Sam. 8:5-7 “And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. 6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. 7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.”

   2. They had the desire to be like the nations.

B. Many today do not want to be distinctive.
   1. We are God’s people and are distinctive.
      a. 1 Pet. 2:9-10 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”
      b. Tit. 2:14 “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

   2. God has called us to be different:
      a. Our thinking
      b. Our speech
      c. Our actions

   3. They desire our worship to be like denominations (Lord’s supper on any day, instrumental music, praise teams, no Bible preaching, etc.).

   4. They desire to fellowship denominations.

   5. They desire an expanded role for women.

Conclusion: These certainly do not cover all the reasons why individuals will leave. The Lord has one church (Eph. 4:4 “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;”) and He is going to save that one church (Eph. 5:23 “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body”). There is no justifiable reason for anyone to leave that one church.