

THE GENIUS OF APOSTASY

How apostasy works.

1. *Apostasy* = A departure from or a moving away from something.
2. *Heresy* = fr. *to choose* = to choose another way or position.
3. Important historic consequences result from everything that is done in the present.

Discernment = the ability to see the long term consequences of a present course of action.

Why it is difficult, yea almost impossible to fight apostasy in its inception — the three “G’s”.

1. *Gradualism*. Apostasy produces minute incremental changes over an extended period of time. At no point in time are the changes radical enough to justify taking a strong position against them.
 - a. Dr. Charles Woodbridge — Apostasy proceeds progressively with a change in:
 - ◆ Mood, then —
 - ◆ Method, then —
 - ◆ Message, and finally —
 - ◆ Morals
 - b. A change from a posture of *confrontation* to a posture of *accommodation*.
2. *Good*. At its inception apostasy has much good to commend it and very little evil to condemn it. Those who stand in opposition to apostasy at this point in time are falsely accused of opposing all the good that is associated with it.
 - a. The classic example here is Jehoshaphat, also Billy Graham.
 - b. Moses smiting the rock produced all the water they needed but tragically lost the privilege of entering the promised land.
3. *Gurus* — the prominent personalities involved.
4. Other reasons:
 - ◆ The appearance of success (initial success) — the deceitfulness of outward appearances.
 - ◆ Confusing high powered promotion for the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - ◆ The unwillingness of God's people to separate.
 - ◆ The Sanballets who want to share in our ministry. cf. Demon possessed girl in Acts 16
 - ◆ The embarrassment of the godly, uncompromising man of God. cf. Samuel in I Samuel 15
 - ◆ The silence of the majority of preachers who stand by and say nothing. cf. The 7000 silent prophets in Elijah's day

The problem of when to separate.

- ◆ When do you call the fire department?
- ◆ When should the dog bark?
- ◆ When should you get off of the train? Train from San Francisco to New York — when a change in direction has been determined.

The necessity of keeping a cutting edge on your ministry.

1. If you do not keep a cutting edge on your ministry, you will ultimately surround yourself with those who join with you, not because they share your convictions, but because they enjoy the success of what you are doing; and you will build an organization that will ultimately repudiate your own convictions.
2. You can have *law* without *love* but you cannot have *love* without *law*. Love always imposes limits for the protection of its object.
3. You cannot build a strong ministry by focusing on issues alone, but you cannot build a strong ministry without dealing with and defining issues.