

As in the Days of Noah

(Living Faithfully While Awaiting the King's Return)

“The Great Falling Away”

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“Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless the apostasy comes first...” (2 Thessalonians 2:3, CSB)

Big Idea:

As the return of Christ draws near, many will abandon the truth, but faithful disciples remain steadfast in Christ and help others remain faithful.

Kingdom Response:

Stand firm in the truth and strengthen others to remain faithful.

Series Heartbeat:

The return of Christ is not an escape from the mission—it is the motivation for the mission.

I. Faithful Disciple-Makers

(2 Thessalonians 2:3; Matthew 24:10-12)

“Many will fall away...” (Matthew 24:10, CSB)

“The love of many will grow cold.” (Matthew 24:12, CSB)

Key Truth:

A heart rarely abandons Christ suddenly—it usually drifts from Him gradually.

II. Faithful Disciple-Makers

(1 John 2:19; 2 Timothy 4:1-5)

“They went out from us, but they did not belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. However, they went out so that it might be made clear that none of them belongs to us.” (1 John 2:19, CSB)

“For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, will multiply teachers for themselves because they have an itch to hear what they want to hear.” (2 Timothy 4:3, CSB)

Key Truth:

We don't remain faithful by finding truth that agrees with us—we remain faithful by submitting ourselves to the truth God has revealed.

III. Faithful Disciple-Makers

(Matthew 24:13; 2 Timothy 4:2, 5; Jude 20-23)

“But the one who endures to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 24:13, CSB)

“Be merciful to those who doubt; save others by snatching them from the fire...” (Jude 22–23, NIV)

Key Truth:

Faithful disciples don't merely stand firm themselves—they help others stand firm too.

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Small Group Questions — Week 5

The Great Falling Away

Texts: 2 Thessalonians 2:3; Matthew 24:10–13; 1 John 2:19; 2 Timothy 4:1–5

Start Here — Reflective Question

Have you ever known someone who once seemed committed to following Jesus but eventually walked away from the faith? Without sharing names or personal details, what did you observe about their journey?

Discussion Questions

1. RECOGNIZE THE DANGER OF FALLING AWAY — 2

Thessalonians 2:3; Matthew 24:10–12; 1 John 2:19

Jesus warned that “many will fall away,” and Paul said that “the apostasy” would come.

Jesus connects falling away with deception, increasing lawlessness, and love growing cold.

John also describes people who had been part of the believing community but eventually left:

“They went out from us, but they did not belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us.”

—1 John 2:19, CSB

- What are some warning signs that someone's love for Christ may be growing cold?
- What does 1 John 2:19 teach us about the difference between being around Christianity and genuinely belonging to Christ?
- Scripture teaches that God keeps His people, while also repeatedly calling believers to endure, remain, and stand firm. How do those truths work together?
- Why is it dangerous to assume that because someone once professed faith, their present relationship with Jesus doesn't matter?

2. REMAIN IN THE TRUTH — 2 Timothy 4:1–5

Paul warns:

“For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, will multiply teachers for themselves because they have an itch to hear what they want to hear.”

People don't always abandon spiritual teaching. Sometimes they find teachers who tell them what they already want to believe.

- Why are we naturally attracted to teaching that confirms what we already want to believe?
- What is the difference between asking, “What does God's Word say?” and asking, “What do I want God's Word to say?”
- With so many voices available through social media, podcasts, YouTube, and other sources, how can we make sure Scripture remains our standard for truth?
- Is there an area of your life where it is especially difficult to submit what you want to what God has said?

3. STRENGTHEN OTHERS TO STAND — Matthew 24:13; Jude 20–23

Faithful disciple-makers don't simply remain faithful themselves. They help others remain faithful too.

- Why do you think people who are beginning to drift sometimes need relationship more than correction?
- What might cause someone to hesitate to tell another Christian that they are doubting, questioning, or struggling spiritually?
- What are some practical ways we can come alongside someone whose faith seems to be wavering?
- How can we help someone return to Jesus and Scripture without making them feel like they are simply a problem we need to fix?

Disciple-Making Connection

The Kingdom Response this week is

:Stand firm in the truth and strengthen others to remain faithful.

- Why is listening important when someone tells us they are struggling with their faith?
- What questions could you ask someone to discover what is really happening in their relationship with Jesus?
- Is there someone God has placed in your life who may be drifting, questioning, or spiritually discouraged? How could you intentionally move toward that person this week?