

# The Downgrade Continuation

# Downgrade: descending slope...

## Downward trend

- England: 100+ years later
- U.S.: several downgrades

# I. Recurring Apostasies Because . . .

# Churches imitate worldly fads

- Entertainment replaces evangelism
  - Sermon
  - Pragmatism (what works)
    - Church growth
    - 1 Jn.2:16

# Neglect of reading

- 1 Tim.4:13 – Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.
- Ep.3:4 – when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ...
  - Twitter

# Training young people for apostasy

- Generation isolated in youth ministry where focus is fun and games . . .

# Apathy

- Spurgeon: “Everywhere there is apathy. Nobody cares whether that which is preached is true or false. A sermon is a sermon whatever the subject; only, the shorter it is the better.”
  - Mt.22:5
  - Hb.2:3

# Focus only on positive, not negative

- Never mention . . .

SIN

HELL

DISCIPLINE

TRUTH

- 1 Co.5



I. Downgrade Continuation

II. Recovering Authority

# 1. Romans 15:2-7

- 14: Greeks, Jews
- 15: ready, willing
- 15: preach gospel
- 15: in Rome
- 16: not ashamed of gospel

COMPROMISE:  
SUREST WAY TO  
LOSE EVERYONE.  
Galatians 1

“We must change  
or  
lose our  
young people.”

“We must become  
Mormons or  
lose our young  
people.”

# 1. Romans 1

- 14: Greeks, Barbarians... Mk.16
- 15: ready, willing, eager
- 15: preach gospel
- 15: in Rome
- 16: not ashamed
- 16: power of God to salvation

2 Timothy  
1:13

Jude  
3

Luke  
16:27-31

## 2. 2 Timothy 3

- What Timothy must do to save himself and others (= 1 Tim.4:15-16)
- 3:1-5a

|                           |                           |                                |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Certainty:<br><b>know</b> | When:<br><b>Last days</b> | What:<br><b>Perilous times</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|

- 3:5b, turn away
- 3:6-7, danger: captured by passion
- 3:8-9, OT parallel

## 2. 2 Timothy 3

- What Timothy must do to save himself and others (= 1 Tim.4:15-16)
- 3:10-17, solutions

Approved  
examples:

10-11

Advance  
warning:

12-13

Adherence  
to Scripture

14-17

## 3. 2 Timothy 4:1-5

What Timothy must do to save others

- The Potentate, 1 (1 Tim.6:15)
- The Precept, 1-2

Preach the Word

Be ready when popular, unpopular

Convince, convict, reprove

Rebuke

Exhort

## 3. 2 Timothy 4:1-5

What Timothy must do to save others

- The Potentate, 1 (1 Tim.6:15)
- The Precept, 1-2
- The Problem, 3-4

Cannot tolerate sound doctrine. 1 K.22

Satisfy own desires. Longing, craving

Itching ears: relieved by new teachers

Turn away ears from truth (4). Ac.7

Turn to fables.

## 3. 2 Timothy 4:1-5

What Timothy must do to save others

- The Potentate, 1 (1 Tim.6:15)
- The Precept, 1-2
- The Problem, 3-4
- The Perseverance, 5

Watch: be sober, self-controlled

Endure: suffer hardship patiently (2:9)

Work: of evangelist

Fulfill: 'bring in full measure' (17)



Downgrade: decline in faith,  
knowledge, attendance, commitment

The early Christians condemned  
false doctrine in a way that sounds  
almost unchristian today – Vance Havner