

As any genuine follower of Christ can see, the apostasy in the mainstream Protestant Church today is unprecedented in history! Of course, this did not happen overnight! Below we will address the process and probably two of the most important parties involved.

In the New Testament Jesus was constantly at odds with two groups of people and warned believers their teaching would destroy the Church. We read in Matthew:

When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. Jesus said to them, "Watch out, and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

(Matthew 16:5-7)

In the passage above, the Lord described the teaching of these two religious groups as like yeast in a loaf being baked, working its way into all parts until the whole loaf is affected!

And what was their teaching we are explicitly warned about? Although the Pharisees and Sadducees had similar character traits, their theology differed to a great extent.

To put it simply, the Pharisees were famous for adding to God's Word, the Sadducees for subtracting from it!

The Church of this Age has suffered to an increasing extent from both, but more so from the latter. Why?

Although the Sadducees were devoted to the Torah and rejected the Pharisees' oral law and man-made traditions, they did not believe in the resurrection, and they did not believe God was still doing miracles in their day.

Another important characteristic of the Sadducees was that their devotion to the Law of Moses was not to know the Heart of God or to help their fellow-countrymen. On the contrary, it was a means for political power!

In Jesus' Day, they agreed with the decisions of Rome, and by accommodating Rome they became very wealthy. For this they were held in low esteem by the average man.

We learn one last interesting fact from Scripture about the religious sects of Pharisees and Sadducees. Although they were often in competition with each other, they would quickly forget their differences when confronted with unyielding truth speakers!

As can be expected, this relationship of convenience has persisted throughout Church History, but nothing compared to what we are now seeing!

Today, very few Protestant leaders will point out the errors and dangers of Roman Catholicism. Worse than this, many will even criticize others that do!

And while there are some who do expose Roman Catholic doctrines, they are reluctant to admit that Rome is the Harlot described in Revelation!!

But there is good news for those who heeded Jesus' warning to repent. Not only will they rule and reign with the Lord in the Age to come, they will also have a part in what the Apostle Paul describes in the following:

*A hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved.*

*(Romans 11:25b)*

This passage has frequently been described as revealing two stages in God's plan to bring the present Age to a close. First, all the Gentiles foreordained for salvation must come to Christ.

Second, when the complete number has been brought in, God will then turn to the preserved remnant of Israel.

This may appear to contradict what the Apostle Paul says earlier in that same chapter, that it will be the Jews turning to Christ that will cause revival in the Gentile world.

But there is no real contradiction. Many commentators agree the change from emphasis on the Gentiles to the Jews will be gradual and progressive, rather than a single instantaneous event.