



[DTGm Revelation Studies](#)

## **Episode 89 - Unveiling Ancient Apostasy: Revelation's Take on Truth**

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In this episode of DTG Ministries, Scott Stanley delves into the profound themes of apostasy as depicted in the book of Revelation. He explores how apostasy began in the first century—highlighting key denials of the Father, Son, and Christ's earthly incarnation—and how these themes persist to the end times. Drawing from 2 Thessalonians, he examines the continued relevance of these early deviations in truth and how they set the stage for the historical rise of the Antichrist.

Stanley discusses the spiritual and political landscape of the early church, the restraint of the Antichrist during Caesar's reign, and the historical transition with Caesar's conversion to Christianity. He connects these events to the long-standing influence and challenges posed by Catholicism through the ages, touching on the Protestant Reformation's role in disrupting these established doctrines.

He critically analyzes the "Roman Road"—a popular evangelical method for becoming a Christian—calling attention to perceived misinterpretations and encouraging listeners to consider the deeper spiritual truths in apostasy and salvation. This episode invites the

faithful to study scripture more deeply, discern traditions, and encourages personal growth towards attaining the 'glory of God'.

Modified Transcript:

Scriptures are transcribed directly with notations. Refer to KJV for verbatim wording.

Hi. This is Scott Stanley with DTG Ministries. We're exploring the deep things of God in the book of Revelation. Today, I want to talk about the apostasy that began in the first century. John gave us two things to look at: That the apostasy, they will deny the Father and Son, and they will deny Christ came in the flesh. But what has happened that would allow this apostasy to continue to the end of the world?

I want to read to you from 2 Thessalonians. I want to just start at verse 1, and we want to just take our time, and look at this.

2Th 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.

2Th 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word or letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you in any way. For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

So there was a falling away, which we know began in the days of the apostles. We know this because the apostle John tells us about it in 1 John chapter 2, that these people walked away from the apostles. *"They went out from us,"* he says. He describes them as denying the Father and Son, and in 1 John 4, denying Christ came in the flesh. So there was an apostasy before the man of sin was revealed. But let me keep reading.

2Th 2:4 This man of sin, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, will sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

2Th 2:5 Remember ye not, that when I was with you, I told you these things?

2Th 2:6 And now you know what is restraining him that he might be revealed in his time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity is already working, only he who is restraining him will continue to restrain, until he is taken out of the way.

2Th 2:8 Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming.

So the apostasy began in the days of the apostles, and because there was an apostasy, it allowed someone to stand up and exalt himself above all that's called God, because the antichrist would do that... would exalt himself above all that's called God. In Paul's day, the antichrist was restrained by Caesar... the fact that Caesar claimed divinity. Caesar claimed to be the Son of God. If anybody stood up and called themselves God and exalted themselves above Caesar, Caesar would have killed them in an instant.

So there had to come an apostasy. Caesar had to be taken out of the way, and then the man of sin would be revealed. We know from history that in the fourth century, the Caesar at that time became a Christian. Hence, Caesar was taken out of the way. He became a Christian himself, and because he is head of the state, he made himself head of the church. Hence, you have your man of sin.

This man of sin and the apostasy continued for hundreds of years. It was called Catholicism until you reach a time when there began to be a reformation, the Protestant Reformation. Protestants were protesters. They protested the pope in Catholicism. By the time Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses on the door of the church, Christians had not read the Bible for over a thousand years. Think about it. The Catholic church, the man of sin, chained the Bible to the pulpit, had it in a language that they couldn't read. So the Bible was not being studied by everybody for a thousand years.

That has caused the apostasy to continue until the Second Coming. It began in John's day when they rejected the apostles. It continues today because for a thousand years, the Bible was not studied. When it began to be studied, you then began to have the Lutherans, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Baptists. These denominations began to come into play because now they've rejected the pope, they're reading the Bible, and everyone is interpreting the book a different way, all of them carrying elements of Catholicism without realizing the danger of it.

Now this has everything to do with the book of Revelation because Revelation is describing the last generation church that comes out of the apostasy, not just out of Catholicism, but out of everyone who is tainted by Catholicism. They will tell you they're not. They would all tell you, "No, we're not Catholic." But the truth is, the Trinity is probably the main, the foundational doctrine of the Catholic church.

If you're believing the Trinity, you're Catholic, whether you know it or not. There's a list of Catholic doctrines people still adhere to, and they don't realize it's not biblical. So if you're in the last generation church, you are going to be led of God and come out of all of the apostasy.

Now, one thing that's come to my attention... and you know, I was raised a Baptist. That's how I grew up in Oklahoma. Thinking about it now, just putting two and two together, there is a doctrine that is being taught. It was taught all my life. There's never been a time I haven't heard this one. Everybody seems to believe it, and it has to do with, for me as a Baptist, it was called the Roman Road. Now, what do we mean by the Roman Road?

Somebody along the way decided to counsel people to become a Christian by taking them down the Roman Road, the book of Romans. There are four verses in particular that they would key on. I want to read these to you. The first one is in Romans 3:23.

**Rom 3:23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

**Rom 6:23** For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Rom 5:8** But God commends his love toward us, in that, while we're yet sinners, Christ died for us.

All of this leads you to Romans 10:9-10.

**Rom 10:9** That if you'll confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.

**Rom 10:10** For with the heart, man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Now, there may be more verses people would use, but that right there is the heart of the Roman Road. Recognize everybody's fallen short of the glory of God. In the Baptist church, I may be exaggerating this a little, but not much. You're told you're just nothing but a dirty, rotten sinner.

In fact, I could extrapolate on that. I could read you things that were given to me about how God can't even look at you. "You're such a sinner. He can't even look at you. And you better believe in Jesus because if you believe in Jesus, he'll see Jesus instead of looking at you. You don't want him to look at you."

Well, that's enough right there, you know, to drive you to depression. But then *the wages of sin is death* (Rom 6:23). So the wages of sin is death, God's gift is eternal life. I can remember reading that and thinking, well, who is paying the wages? Who pays the wage? Wage is something I've earned. Well, the wages of sin is death. Who's paying that? Basically, what this would have to mean is that if you don't live up to God's standard or if you don't live up to what God desires from you, he's going to kill you.

Romans 5:8, where "*God commends his love toward us, that while we're sinners, Christ died.*" Well, I guess they're saying that God loved you so much, the second person of the Trinity died for you. But if that be true, there was never a time one was without the other. So this really isn't the Son of God. This is his friend. So I realized, well, God didn't really give me anything. I mean, that was a question I had.

Then, of course, Romans 10:9 and 10, and I can't tell you how many times that was quoted to me. In fact, when I did come to the Lord, my pastor had me date that verse in case Satan tempted me, I could always go back and look at the date that I confessed Jesus, and then I could remember that I got saved. I got saved.

What I'm sharing with you, I know it's all over the country. I mean, everybody believes stuff like this, but that's Oklahoma Baptist, basically. As I got out of the Baptist church and went into Pentecostal churches and everything else I looked at and studied, those

verses all basically had the same meaning. Nobody really took the time to understand what was being said in any of them.

So I want to take a few minutes on these verses and share with you what these mean to me now, because I look at myself as having come out of the apostasy. Maybe I should say I'm still trying to come out of the apostasy. I'm not saying I have every answer to every question, but the Lord has helped me to see through some of this.

So when we read this first one, Romans 3:23, "*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,*" what is Paul talking about? Because for glory, I don't know that anyone ever defined that for me. What is glory? What do you mean by "glory"? As a kid in the Baptist church, you think of the glory of God. You think of light shooting out of his body, or out of his head, you know, and "glory." It's this bright light of beams and light, and I don't know. I couldn't make it make sense. Of course, I've fallen short of the glory of God, but what is the glory of God?

Exodus 34. In Exodus 34, the Son of God comes down to Moses and declares the name of God, and if you'll look at Exodus 33:18,

Exo 33:18 And he said, I beseech thee, show me your glory. (He says this to the Son of God.)

Exo 33:19 And he said, I'll make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before you. I'll be gracious to whom I'll be gracious. I will show mercy on whom I'll show mercy.

Exo 33:20 You can't see my face, for there shall no man see me and live.

Well, now I know what that means. Exodus 33:20, it's the Father you've got to see. This is like an allegory. *You shall not see my face and live.* It isn't that God was so holy that if you looked on him, you'd die. What Christ is telling you here is that it's the Father you have to see. Remember in John chapter 1, he came to declare him, the Father.

Jhn 1:18 No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son is in the bosom of the Father. He came to declare him.

Remember Matthew 11:27? Jesus said,

Mat 11:27 ... (No man has seen the Son) No one knows the Son but the Father, and no one knows the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever he will reveal him.

It's the Father that you've got to see. Jesus in John 14, *if you've seen me, you've seen the Father*. In other words, he wasn't revealing himself. Right here, in Exodus 33:20,

Exo 33:20 You cannot see my face. No man shall see me and live.

You don't live seeing Jesus. You live seeing the Father in Jesus. So when he declares the glory of God in Exodus 34:5,

Exo 34:5 Jehovah (it's the Son of God), descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah. (He was asked to declare the glory.)

Exo 34:6 And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah God is merciful, he's gracious, he's long suffering, he is abundant in goodness and truth.

Exo 34:7 He keeps mercy for thousands. He lifts up iniquity, rebellion, and sin, and he will by no means clear the guilty...

Here is the glory of God. So when Paul makes the statement "*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,*" that is what he's talking about... that we fall short of being patient and kind and merciful. We fall short of those things... forgiving. Again, that's why on the cross, he portrayed you with stripes on your back because you can't forgive everybody. You struggled with that.

He portrays you with a crown of thorns, a lot of guilt. You're carrying guilt. So this verse, "*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...*" now I know that is what Paul meant when he wrote that, and nobody would argue that. Nobody would argue that. But let me connect two verses with that. The first one is in Romans chapter 5. I want to read verses 1 and 2.

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith (by what we're taught), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Rom 5:2 Through whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

What do you mean by "I'm in hope of it"? Connect that to 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 14.

2Th 2:14 Whereunto he called you by the gospel, to obtain the glory of Jesus (who is the image of God (2Co 4:4)).

When you are living in hope of the glory, that's obtaining the glory. That when you look at God's love and forgiveness and patience and kindness, the gospel says that you will obtain a character like God. Paul says in Romans 8 that *we will be made in the image of Christ*. So we've all fallen short of the glory. The object of the gospel is for you to obtain that glory.

Next point. Romans chapter 6, verse 23.

Rom 6:23 The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through or in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now the wages of sin is death. What if I were to put the word "the" in front of the word "sin" right there? The word "the..." *for the wages of the sin is death*. Would that make any difference to you? Does that make any difference at all that that has the definite article in front of it?

Well, in 1 John chapter 3, I want to read verse 4. I'm going to read it the way the King James has it first.

1Jn 3:4 Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

This verse does not have the word law in it one time, but it has the word "the" in front of "sin." Here's the way it reads.

1Jn 3:4 Whosoever commits the sin commits iniquity, for the sin is iniquity.

Here he is defining what it means when they would put the word "the" in front of "sin," and you're going to find it throughout the New Testament. What does it mean? That we're talking about iniquity, not sin. What's the difference? Iniquity is the thought you have before you sin. It's two different things. Did Jesus die for your sin? Yes. How? Titus 2:14, *He redeems us from all iniquity.* If he can redeem you from iniquity, you won't sin. So let's go back to Romans 6:23.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of iniquity is death. God's gift of life, which you find in Jesus, is eternal life.

God's gift of eternal life is found in Jesus. Eternal life. You're not going to be living according to your iniquity. You're going to be living in accordance with God's spirit, and by means of the cross and the ministry of your high priest, God will give you that information, allowing you to work out your own salvation through fear and trembling. Let's take it to the next verse.

The way the Roman Road places these verses, the next one, Romans 5:8, means God exhibits his love toward us, and that while we were sinners, Christ died. In their mind, what that means is he paid your sin debt. See, the wages of sin, everybody's fallen short, and they've sinned. Well, the wages of sin is death, and by the way, God is showing you he loves you by letting Jesus die for you. In their mind, he paid your sin debt.

How bogus is that? Well, the fact that they teach he paid your sin debt, there's not a verse in the Bible that says that. They would have to take a verse like this and say that's what it means, but that isn't what it says. It says God exhibits, he commends, he exhibits his love by Christ dying. Why? Because Christ was his only begotten Son. This Roman Road makes no sense if you're not a Trinitarian.

Only someone in confusion about God would allow someone to lead them down the Roman Road to the last verse we're going to talk about, which is Romans 10:9-10. Let me say, this is why the church is still in apostasy. They can't come out of it because they believe what they believe. They may say "We're not Catholic," and they may turn away from the Catholic church, but they're still in confusion about God and truth. If this Roman Road makes sense to you, that's only proof that you're in absolute confusion. Last verse, Romans 10:9.

Rom 10:9 If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.

Well, that's interesting because of the way they interpret "saved." I want to read a verse to you in 1 Corinthians 1:18.

1Co 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. But unto us which are saved, it's the power of God.

Well, let me read to you the way this actually reads.

1Co 1:18 The preaching of the cross is to them who are perishing, foolishness. But unto us which are being saved, it's the power of God.

There is no verse in the Bible that tells you to pray a prayer and you are saved. That is what they're saying happens in Romans 10:9-10. That is not what that means. There is no such thing as praying a prayer, and now you are saved. Think about it. Think about all of the millions of people who have believed that lie and realize that is why this nation is in the fix it's in. This is why we're in the place we're in. Because everyone was told, "Pray the prayer. Now you're saved. Now just go live for Jesus, and you're okay."

*Jesus died to redeem you from all iniquity, and you are to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* In other words, you apply the tools God gives you to overcome iniquity. There's no such thing as praying a prayer, and now you're saved. That is a lie. There is no such thing. I think that will probably hit people harder than telling them there's no Trinity either, because everybody has prayed the prayer.

I remember being in the Baptist church and the pastor saying, "Every head bowed, every eye closed, just raise your hand." And we all pray the prayer, and now you can come up and get some literature. I'm just now realizing the depth of the darkness that I grew up in. I believe it's a miracle any of us get out of it, because that's almost, that's just what you want to hear.

Did you pray the prayer? I did. "Well, you're saved. You're going to heaven." I had the Baptist come to my home and tell me that once I get saved, then I'm always going to be saved. I can't lose it. I asked him, I said, "Are you saying that if I walk into this grocery store down here to rob it and I rape somebody, I rob the store, rape, and kill somebody, and I get shot in the parking lot, that I'm going to heaven?" And he screamed... he fell on his knees and threw his hands out, and he said, "Yes," because he believed the sinner's prayer was the way to salvation. I would like for somebody to show me that in the Bible, where somebody prayed a prayer and they got saved.

Paul says you're "being saved." There is a process of understanding the truth and then living it. The "living it" will perfect your faith. 1 Peter 1:9- *"The end of your faith, the aim of your faith, is the salvation of your soul."* The perfection of your faith is the salvation of your soul. You continue to grow, and you continue to live what you understand, and you will be saved. So let's look at this in Romans 10:9, *"If you will confess."* Well, what if I said that was "profess"? Same word. Look at Matthew 7, verse 23.

Mat 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

That verse speaks volumes. But here is the word King James put, "confess" in Romans 10:9. Well, there it's "profess." It's "profess" again in Titus 1:16.

Tit 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being made abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

What's the difference between "confess" and "profess"? Well, I used to be in a multilevel marketing scheme, and I would confess that the product was a good product. But when I sold it and took this every day and continued to tell people about it, I was professing it. I made it a part of my life. You can confess one thing. When you profess it, you live it. So Romans 10:9,

Rom 10:9 If you'll profess, profess this with your mouth, Jesus, and believe God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.

Why do I have to confess that God raised him from the dead, and what do you mean by "you will be saved"? See, they'll take that word "saved" and say it's instantaneous... "You're saved." No. To profess Jesus and believe God raised him from the dead is the process you enter to work out your salvation, and you *will be saved* through that process. There's nothing instantaneous about that. Why would he say *work out your own salvation*? At the very end of Romans 4, let me read verses 24 and 25.

Rom 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus from the dead (if you believe on the Father who raised Jesus from the dead);  
Rom 4:25 Jesus was surrendered because of our offenses (that word translates out to be your iniquity). And he was raised for our justification.

Why? How does that even work? I remember reading that and saying, "Well, I don't understand." You raised him from the dead, and it justifies me. How could that be? Because that's what he says in Romans 10:9, "*Profess Jesus and believe God raised him from the dead, and you will be saved.*" Eventually, eventually, you will work out your salvation and overcome all iniquity.

You're being saved, just like he said in 1 Corinthians 1. Why does his being raised, what does that have to do with anything? Because of Romans chapter 6, where Paul tells you that. Let me just read this, verse 1.

Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in the sin? Shall we continue in iniquity that grace may abound?

Rom 6:2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to iniquity, live any longer in it?

Rom 6:3 Don't you know, as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Rom 6:4 We're buried with him through the baptism into death: that like as he was raised from the dead by the glory (the love and long suffering and kindness) of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.

What is he saying there? That you are baptized, you are taught about the death of Jesus. You have to be taught what happened at the cross, and what happened at the cross? He was made to be sin (2Co 5:21). He portrayed our guilt. He portrayed our unforgiveness, our nakedness, our darkness. He portrayed all of that. You take that picture that God

painted with his Son. You take that picture, and you work out your own salvation, and you profess Jesus, and you believe God raised him from the dead because when he raised him from the dead, he raised you.

His Son was the picture of the man with guilt, the man with unforgiveness, the man with nakedness, the man who was in darkness. He was a picture of that man. That is the man God raised from the dead because he said, "Into your hands, I commit my spirit..." God raised him from the dead. He was a picture of you. You profess Jesus and believe God raised him from the dead because it's your resurrection we're talking about. You do that, and you'll be saved.

Was any of this ever taught to you? It was never taught to me. I was taught that if you prayed the prayer, you're saved. "Did you pray the prayer? Well, you're saved." I'm telling you right now, I can hardly bear to think of what's going on in the churches. It's criminal. Everyone is thinking they're saved and they're right with God. And what did we just read? *"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. I never knew you. Depart from me"* (Mat 7:23).

That's my prayer that people who are serious about the Lord can come out of all of the apostasy. Again, when the pope came into power and chained the Bible to the pulpit, believers did not read the Bible for a thousand years. And when they finally did, they started following men who raised up the denominations. You get tied in that denomination, and you get tied down... and you can't move out of it because of peer pressure. You don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. You hate to tell the pastor, "You're wrong." But I'm telling you right now, the kingdom of heaven is suffering violence. The violent will take it by force (Mat 11:12).

God is looking for those people who are strong enough to stand up and be counted with Jesus Christ. The Trinity is false. The Catholic church is false. All the churches that teach Catholicism are false. There is no such thing as a sinner's prayer. But there is a Father who loved you so much he gave you his only begotten Son, who is functioning as your high priest to intercede, bring to you the understanding of God, not protect you from God, to bring you God's understanding so that you can overcome all iniquity and be saved.

Heavenly Father, we love you. I just pray for help in all things. I pray for your church.  
May we have the clarity and assurance, and courage to stand up and stand for truth, and  
I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.