

The Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, and all other Christian denominations, are according to LDS teaching, part of an “apostasy” from the true Church.

Joseph Smith, the founder the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, claimed he asked God which church he should join. Joseph said that God told him he should join none of them, for they were “**all wrong,**” and “**all their creeds were an abomination in his sight**” also that “those professors were all **corrupt**” and “**they teach the doctrines and commandments of men.**” (Joseph Smith History 1:19)

LDS leadership claims the Bible predicted a total apostasy would occur shortly after the death of the original apostles. In addition, the Mormon Church is the restoration of the one true church on the earth. Christians have reasonably asked, “Does the Bible really predict a total apostasy?”

#### LDS quotes concerting this apostasy.

“For a time, this original church was organized by the Savior endured as established.... Both the Savior himself and also the ancient apostles prophesied however, that this would not last. The Church would be rocked by apostasy, and there would be a falling away.... **Christ’s church... would one day not be found upon the earth.** What would remain would be churches that had changed...” (Rex E Lee, *What Mormons Believe*, p. 4-5)

“Nothing less than a **complete apostasy** of the Christian religion would warrant the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” (B.H. Roberts, *Introduction to the History of the Church*, p. XL)

“...the kingdoms of this world made war against the kingdom of God... **and they have prevailed against it, and the kingdom ceased to exist.**” (Mormon Apostle, Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 13:125)

“Since the departure of the true gospel was universal, as the prophets foretold, and since such universal apostasy was confirmed in the statement of Jesus to Joseph Smith, it would follow that a restoration would be necessary. Such a restoration is the message of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” (LaGrand Richards, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, p. 32)

#### Bible verses LDS leaders use as predictions of the Great Apostasy.

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which was preached unto you: Whom heaven must receive until the **times of restitution of all things**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21)

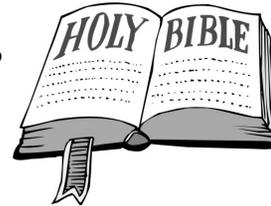
Mormon Apostle LaGrand Richards said; “It is obvious that there cannot be a **restitution** of that which has not been taken away. Therefore, this scripture is another very plain prediction of apostasy....” (A *Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, p. 35)



“Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves.” (Acts 20:30)

“Let no man deceive you by any means: For that day shall not come, except there come a **falling away** first....” (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in latter times some shall **depart from the faith...**” (1 Timothy 4:1-2)



If nothing more is said, it could sound like there was an apostasy, and that the Bible even predicted it!

In reality, the Bible does not predict an apostasy, at least as described by the leaders of the LDS Church. This is easily demonstrated by responsibly examining the pages of the Bible. This is accomplished in two stages: First, by looking at some clear passages that cause serious problems for LDS interpretations: Second, by taking a closer look at the Bible passages used to demonstrate the Bible predicted this “apostasy.”

#### A “do” and a “don’t” for Bible Interpretation

**Do** practice Exegesis: That is, draw the meaning out of the text itself. Interpret the Bible, with the Bible.

**Don’t** practice Eisogesis: That is to import a meaning that is foreign to the text from an outside source.

#### Some CLEAR passages that cause problems for the LDS interpretations:

Compare the quote from Orson Pratt to Hebrews 12:28: “Wherefore we receiving a **kingdom** which **cannot be moved**, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God...”

“To him be glory **in the church** by Christ Jesus to **all generations** forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:21) Compare to LDS quotes.

“Nevertheless **the foundation of God standeth sure**, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.” (2 Timothy 2:15-19) Compare to LDS quotes.

The above verses describe a continuing Church, not one that would cease to exist.

**Take a closer look at the Bible verses used by the LDS Church to support an apostasy:**



Now it is time to open up the Bible and follow along. Read the context of each passage along with the bullet points below. This will open up the full picture of what the Bible really teaches on this subject.

**Acts 3:19-20**—Read 3:1-26

- We know from the CLEAR passages that this is not speaking of a “total apostasy” of the church.
- Peter is teaching the men of Israel, not the Church (3:12), that they have fallen away from the Lord; and that the nation would one day be restored (3:21).
- This **restoration of Israel** as a nation was spoken by “all the prophets (3:21).” (See Jer. 32:42-44; Ezek. 37:21-28; Hos. 14:4-7; Amos 9:11-15 and Rom. 9:25-10:12)
- Problem! None of the Prophets in the Bible speak of the whole Church falling away.
- The LDS interpretation of this passage is a perfect example of eisogesis.

**Acts 20:30**—Read 20:17-32

- Paul was warning the Ephesian elders of what was going to happen in their **local congregation**.
- The good news is they listened to the warning. (See Revelation 2:1-3 where Jesus commends them for a good job several years later.)
- Paul also wrote 1st and 2nd Timothy to the Church in Ephesus to warn Timothy of the same thing (compare 1 Tim. 4:1-2 with 2 Tim. 2:19). The good news is even though there will be false teachers (like Joseph Smith), the foundation of God is solid. There will never be a total apostasy.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3**—Read 2:1-12

- Paul is speaking of a distinguishable apostasy, and a distinguishable man of sin (The Anti-Christ). This passage simply does not fit the LDS model.
- This passage does not speak of a total apostasy followed by a restoration of the Mormon Church. Will some fall away? Yes, but not all (See clear passages cited earlier.)
- Important: This falling away is followed by the second coming of Jesus, not the formation of the LDS church (See 2:1-2). To add a church restoration is to add something that is not in the text.

**1st Timothy 4:1-2**—Read 4:1-11

- This passage does not say “all” would depart, only “some.”
- Compare this again with 2 Timothy 2:15-19.
- This text describes a specific false teaching. That is salvation can be found in following a set of rules; like don’t marry, don’t eat meat etc..

### Conclusion

At first glance, the LDS interpretations make sense. However, when Biblical context are examined the error is exposed.

The LDS Church claims it is the “restored” church. However, a restoration is not necessary if there has not been a total apostasy.

The good news is this:

- Christ will receive glory in the Church in every generation (Ephesians 2:21).
- We have received a kingdom which cannot be moved (Hebrews 12:28).
- The sure foundation of God stands in spite of individual false teachers (2 Timothy 2:15-19).

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# Reasonable Questions series

# DOES THE BIBLE PREDICT THE GREAT APOSTASY?

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