



Why Local Churches Falter – Pt. 2

A STUDY OF HOW A LOCAL CHURCH DECLINES

Introduction



- The N.T. shows concern for the spiritual wellbeing of local churches – Rev. 2-3; Acts 15:36,41; 2 Cor. 11:28
- If God is concerned, we should be concerned.
- Last week we considered the first two stages.
 - **Spoken understanding** of the truth – Eph. 4:1-5
 - **Unspoken understanding** of the truth – 2 Pet. 1:12-13; 2 Tim. 4:1-5

Stage 3:

Unspoken Misunderstanding of the Truth

- The distinctive truth is no longer preached, and brethren have a fuzzy conception or misconception of the truth.
 - The truth may still be practiced, but only by default
 - There is little if any concept of how different the Lord's church is from others.
- The Bible warns of error creeping into the local church and how teaching truth is the only defense against it.
 - Paul's exhortation and warning to the Ephesians – Eph. 4:11-16
 - Paul's warning to the Ephesian elders – Acts 20:28-32
 - Peter's warning to his readers – 2 Pet. 3:15-17

Stage 4:

Spoken Misunderstanding of the Truth



- The church no longer holds to the truth and instead embraces, preaches, and practices error.
 - Its doctrine has lost the distinctiveness of the truth and the religious world is embraced and commended.
 - This church has truly become one among many.
- The Bible warns about where error leads. And it never leads to God or salvation.
 - Blind leading blind means both fall into a pit – Mt. 15:14
 - False teachers and teaching lead to destruction – 2 Pet. 2:1-3
 - The truth must be lived and preached to save souls – 1 Tim. 4:16
 - Two sobering warnings – 2 Pet. 2:17-22; 2 Thess. 1:7-9