Keeping Local Churches From Apostasy
And they have been told about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to **forsake** Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or walk according to our customs. -- Acts 21:21

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the **rebellion** comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction

– II Thessalonians 2:3
• Christ Centered
  – If you love me, you will keep my commandments.  
    -- John 14:15
  – And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come 
    proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty 
    speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing 
    among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified 
    – I Corinthians 2:1-2
• Faithful to the Word
  – All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
    -- II Timothy 3:16-17
• Faithful to the Word
  – Whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. – I Peter 4:11
• There are more challenges than meet the eye
  – Independent churches have no hierarchy
  – Every member has equal obligation to “soundness”
• Maintain Purpose
  – New Testament teaches limited focus for churches
    • “Mission” changes when limits are not recognized
    • “Good causes” do not take precedence over NT authority
    • NT must not be disregarded in order to “fit in”
• Maintain Purpose
  – Faulty judgment must be avoided
    • “I don’t see anything wrong with it” is insufficient
    • “Do you see anything right with it?” just as important
    • A slippery slope can lead to a fall
  – Traditional beliefs/practices can stray from purpose
    • Can keep church ensconced in apathy
• Maintain Purpose
  – Purpose maintained when everyone seeks truth
  • Aided by qualified overseers

He must **not be a recent convert**, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. – I Tim. 3:6
He must **hold firm to the trustworthy word** as taught, so that he may be able to **give instruction in sound doctrine** and also to rebuke those who contradict it. – Titus 1:9
• Maintain Purpose
  – Purpose maintained when everyone seeks truth
  • Fed with “solid food”

But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. – Titus 2:1

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. -- James 3:1
• Keep Dynamics in Check
  – Every church of any size has varying dynamics
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mature</th>
<th>Immature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fact-Based</td>
<td>Feelings-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loud</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Keep Dynamics in Check
  – Strengths are used for the betterment of others

We who are **strong** have an obligation to bear with the failings of the **weak**, and not to please ourselves. – Romans 15:1

I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to **instruct one another**. – Romans 15:14
• Keep Dynamics in Check
   – Strengths are used for the betterment of others

**Older men** are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. **Older women** likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good

-- Titus 2:2-3
• Keep Dynamics in Check
  – Strengths are used for the betterment of others
  – Key is making sure dynamics guided as God directs
Danger: Wrong Dynamics in Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mature</th>
<th>Immature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fact-Based</td>
<td>Feelings-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loud</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Danger: Wrong Dynamics in Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mature</th>
<th>Immature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fact-Based</td>
<td>Feelings-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loud</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Danger: Wrong Dynamics in Teaching**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mature</th>
<th>Immature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fact-Based</td>
<td>Feelings-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loud</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>Immature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact-Based</td>
<td>Feelings-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loud</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Keep Dynamics in Check
  – Good leadership aids in this
  – Every member must gauge own “dynamic”
• Live Humbly
  – Pride destroys **everything** it touches

The fear of the **LORD** is hatred of evil.

Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.
  - Prov. 8:13

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “**God opposes**
the proud but gives grace to the humble.” – Jas. 4:6

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among
you **not to think of himself more highly** than he ought to
think – Rom. 15:14
• Live Humbly
  – When I disagree with a brother...
    • Forgo liberties on matters of conscience
    • Change when wrong
    • Deal gently when right

These Attitudes Combat Apostasy in the Local Church
on Christ, the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand.