



BBC UPDATE

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 15

JULY 15, 2026



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS

Introduction

Occasionally, a preacher will say something like, “We must be in the last days because of the increase in apostasy all around,” citing II Tim. 3:1 ff. as his proof text. Sometimes, one of the recorded sins will be singled out and expounded as a “sign” of the Rapture.¹ For instance, the obvious observation about the narcissistic American society which evidences the egotistic sin of “*lovers of their own selves*,” justifies saying, “Surely this must be a sign of the Second Advent.” Many preachers and teachers, even those claiming to hold to the imminent coming of Christ, posit the fallacious notion that “the last days” started in the nineteenth century and extend into the twenty-first century. There are several biblical reasons for rejecting the position that “the last days” refer to a period starting sometime *after* the Apostolic Age, and therefore there are signs for the Rapture.



First, prophecy must be pertinent to the original audience. Paul wrote to Timothy so that he would know what to expect later in his lifetime during the Apostolic Age. Second, Paul had the expectation of being “*caught up*” (*harpazo* [13x] literally “harpooned”) in his lifetime. Third, the Scripture is very clear when the last times (days) began, as the Apostle John revealed, saying, “*Little children, it is **the last time**: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time*” (I Jn. 2:18). “The last days” relate to the fulfillment of Jacob’s prophecy which included the coming of *Shiloh* (Gen. 49:1, 10). The last times began when the

¹ Paul did not look for signs but for the Saviour, saying, “*For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Phil. 3:20).

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS (CONTINUED)

Messiah/King came with His proposed Kingdom (Mt. 3:2; 4:17; see also Mk. 1:1-2). Peter recognized that “the last days” had certainly begun by the time of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, saying, *“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in **the last days**, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters*



shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:16-17). Paul revealed that “the last days” began with the Lord Jesus Christ’s words which were ultimately inscripturated in the Apostolic Age, saying, *“Hath in **these last days** spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds”* (Heb. 1:2). James addressed his audience as sinning in “the last days,” saying, *“Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the **last days**”* (Jam. 5:3).

Fourth, the *Book of Revelation* was written to seven immersionist or Baptist churches and their members. For non-biblical Baptist scholars, theologians, and professors of para-church or secular institutions, they are reading the “mail” of someone else and do not understand the message fully. No wonder there are so many contrary and conflicting interpretations of the *Apocalypse*!

Fifth, the error that “the last days” began sometime after the Apostolic Age is based on the “Church-Age” heresy that the *Apocalypse* teaches that there will be “Seven Church Ages” spread out over two thousand years of Christendom. This position is Protestant in origin and was popularized by the Scofield Reference Bible. The Lord Jesus Christ revealed to the seven churches in Asia Minor the coming events of prophecy (cf. Rev. 1:4, 20). Although these churches are representative of NT assemblies anywhere and at any time, they do not represent the so-called “Church Ages” of the Universal Church, including Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Although many Baptist preachers speak of living in the “Laodicean Church Age,” they should know scripturally that this

Continued on next page

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS (CONTINUED)

is theological bunk. Organizing the “Church Ages” around arbitrary Catholic and Protestant historical events is theologically disastrous, ecclesiologically deceptive, and extremely subjective. The Apostle Paul did *not* teach Timothy that sometime in the far future when the Laodicean Church Age would finally arrive, the Last Days would begin and End Time Apostasy would signal the signs of the Rapture. Those Baptists who teach this ecclesiological and eschatological heresy are guilty of promoting Protestant theology and Romish/Protestant “church history” in Baptist garb and undermine the very doctrine of the imminent return of Christ.²

Proponents of this heresy are former Protestant preachers paving the way for current heretics. For instance, Theodore Epp, who stated concerning Rev. 2-3, saying, “If I were to give a title to this section I would call it ‘the Great Apostasy of the Last Days Traced from the Beginning of the Church’s History’... it [apostasy] began early in church history and will be consummated in the world after the true Church is gone. The decline in faith can be traced through these seven churches with the climax in the great apostate church of Revelation 17.” (Theodore Epp, *Practical Studies in Revelation*, p. 45). Harry Ironsides affirmed concerning the Philadelphia “Church Age,” saying, “Following the Reformation came a time when a cold, lifeless formalism seemed to settle over all Protestant Christendom... but in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a great wave of blessing came over all of those lands where the Reformation had gone... Marvelous awakenings [Protestant] occurred.” (Harry Ironsides, *The Ironside Collection*, n.p.). J. A. Seiss averred, saying, “Can any man scrutinize narrowly the professed Church of our day, and say that we have not reached the Laodicean age.” (J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, p. 55). Biblical Baptists do not interpret “church” in any sense to include Catholicism or Protestantism, nor do Biblical Baptists recognize that the history of Catholicism or Protestantism is the legitimate Christian history of the Lord’s immersionist churches.

² When challenged by this author about the imminency doctrine, one Baptist stated that the “Church Ages” could be very short and all occur within the Apostolic Age. But then, the retort is “why call them ‘ages.’”

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS (CONTINUED)

Interpretation

The Apostle Paul did indeed warn Timothy of the coming apostasy in the Apostolic Age. He revealed that apostasy would increase (II Tim. 3:13), enumerating sins of mankind that would run their full course in the first century (cf. Rom. 1:17-32). The perilous times would include seasons of difficulties in the first century within “the last days,” where the intensity of the following sins would be manifest. His litany of evils included “*lovers of their own selves*” or a “me first” society, “*covetous*” or those loving materialism, “*boasters*” or pretenders, “*proud*” or haughty, “*blasphemers*” or slanders, “*disobedient to parents*” or young rebels, “*unthankful*” or ingrates, “*unholy*” or impious, “*without natural affection*” or having no natural familial love, “*trucebreakers*” or contract breakers, “*false accusers*” or diabolical, “*incontinent*” or without self-control, “*fierce*” or savage, “*despisers of those that are good*” or anti-good men, “*traitors*” or willing to betray, “*heady*” or reckless, “*highminded*” or puffed up, and “*lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*” or hedonistic rather than holistic. Paul concluded that apostasy takes on a respectable religious nature, but in the end it has “*a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof...*” (II Tim. 3:5). Societies that allow this behavior to run rampant, coupled with the evil leadership of which Solomon warned, saying, “*If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked*” (Prov. 29:12), are ripe for divine judgment if they do not self-destruct prematurely (cf. Hos. 13:9).

Conclusion

The West, but especially America, has become the “New Sodom” with all forms of godless gender ideation accepted and normalized. NT church members should recognize that apostasy will abound and intensify until Christ comes back. In the meantime, they should take Paul’s advice and “*from such turn away*” (II Tim. 3:5). John encouraged the believer, saying, “*And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever*” (I Jn. 2:17). Finally, the wicked with no regard for God, and assume that He is ignorant and does not care (Ps. 73:11), will die in

³ Most public school children are the product of atheistic evolutionary inculcation and therefore reject all authority.

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS (CONCLUSION)

their sins and burn forever in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:15). Isaiah gave the future picture of the nameless damned, saying, *“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh”* (Isa. 66:22-24)! Paul declared, *“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, **be ye reconciled to God.** For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”* (II Cor. 5:20-21).



COLLIN CARESO

The young man Collin Careso, a member of Bible Baptist Church, recently graduated from high school with honors in five subjects. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Careso, one of our faithful families. The Careso Family, including daughter Celine, travel two hours one way from New York City for church services on Sundays. They are former members of Pastor Nards Salgado of Cornerstone Baptist Church Dasmariñas in the Philippines. We are thankful for this faithful and committed Christian family!

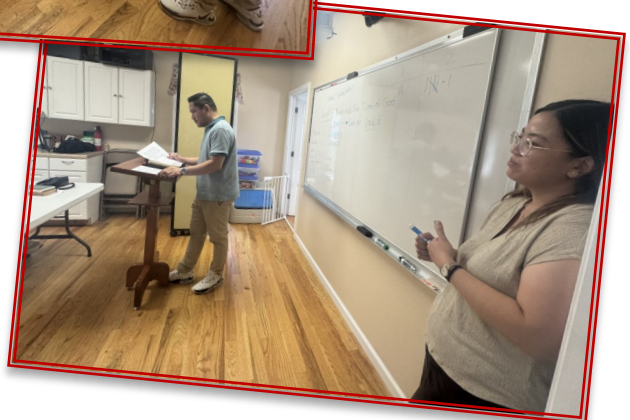


BIBLE QUIZ ON THE GOSPEL OF MARK

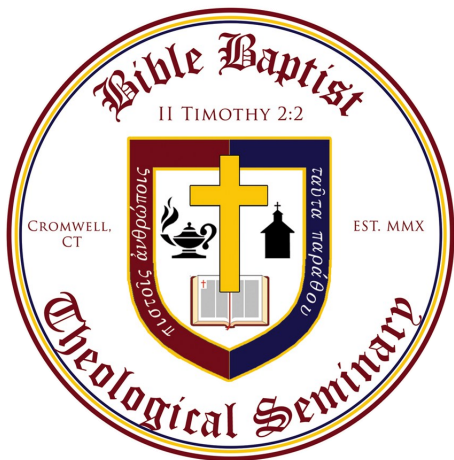
The young people in several sister churches are involved in a competition about the content of the Gospel of Mark. They practice at Bible Baptist Church in person or via Zoom for a final competition at Community Baptist Church in PA on October 3rd. They are diligently studying this portion of Scripture and enjoying the fellowship.

We are thankful for the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Aiko Tinte, together with Pastor Ryan Strouse and Mr. Marquis Burwell. We also praise the Lord for Nathaniel Fittz and Sophia Gagnon, who faithfully volunteer their time to assist them.

Pray that these young people grow in their desire to study Scripture and strengthen their bond with fellow believers!



BBTS FALL 2026 COURSES



Bible Baptist Theological Seminary courses will include **Ecclesiastes** taught by Dr. M. Ryan Strouse on Monday evenings, 6-9 PM, and **Advanced Greek and Hebrew** by Dr. T. M. Strouse on Thursday evenings, 6-9 PM.

The Bible Baptist Theological Seminary semester starts on **Monday, August 31, 2026.**

BBC / BBTS SCHEDULE

BBC/BBTS 2026 SCHEDULE

July 20-24, 2026
Calvary Baptist Church
Plymouth, NH
I and II Thessalonians

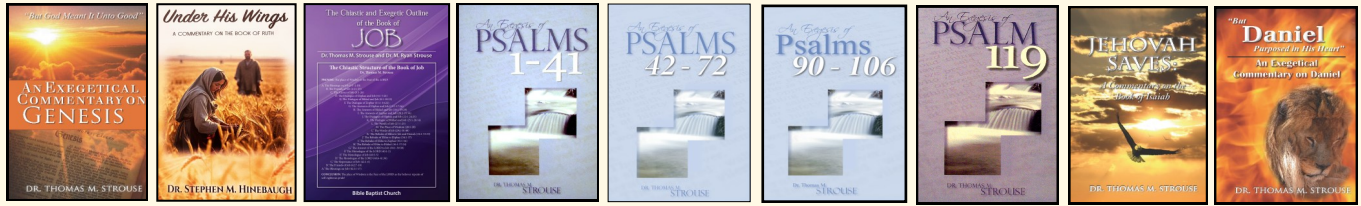
Oct. 18-21, 2026
Willow Grove Baptist Church
Waynesburg, PA
Timeless Truths Bible Conference

Sep. 28-Oct. 2, 2026
Bible Baptist Church
Nashua, NH
Isaiah

Nov. 6, 2026
BBTS Fall Lecture Series
TBD

The Publication Page

The books on this page may be purchased by contacting
Bible Baptist Church at 860-930-9960 or drtms_bbts@juno.com



Genesis
\$20.00

Ruth
\$25.00

Job
\$25.00

Psalms 1-41
\$20.00

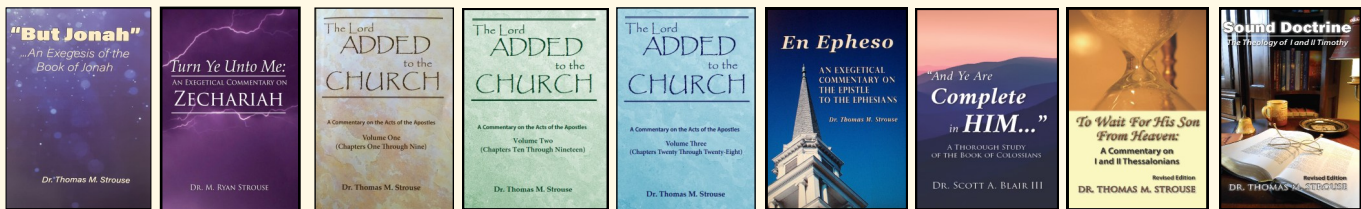
Pss 42-72
\$25.00

Pss 90-106
\$25.00

Psalm 119
\$20.00

Isaiah
\$20.00

Daniel
\$20.00



Jonah
\$15.00

Zechariah
\$30.00

Acts 1-9
\$30.00

Acts 10-19
\$30.00

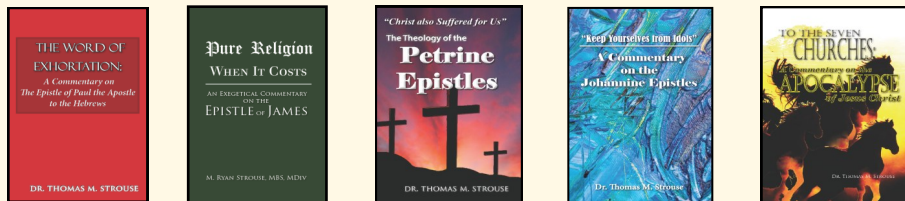
Acts 20-28
\$30.00

Ephesians
\$20.00

Colossians
\$20.00

Thessalonians
\$20.00

Timothy
\$20.00



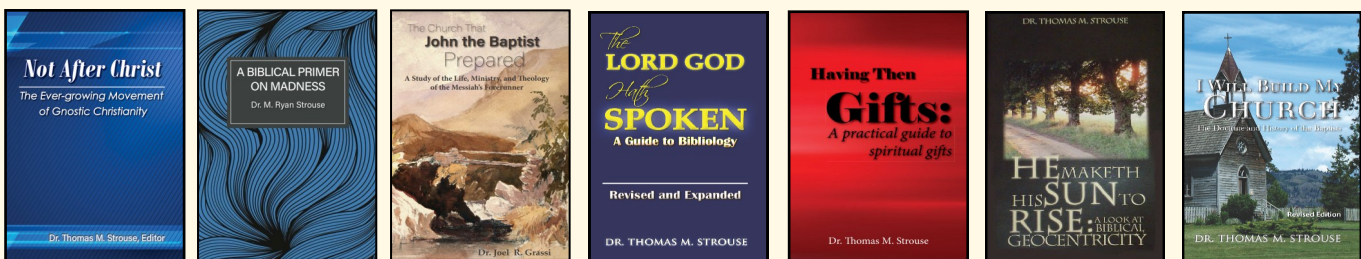
Hebrews
\$30.00

James
\$30.00

1 & 2 Peter
\$20.00

Johannine Epistles
\$30.00

Revelation
\$30.00



Gnosticism
\$25.00

Biblical Madness
\$20.00

John the Baptist
\$35.00

Bibliology
\$15.00

Spiritual Gifts
\$8.00

Geocentricity
\$10.00

Baptist Doctrine & History
\$15.00

If you have any news
for the next issue of the
BBC Update, please
send an email to
drtms_bbts@juno.com



Bible Baptist Theological Seminary
A Ministry of Bible Baptist Church
40 Country Squire Drive
Cromwell, CT 06416
860-613-2096
www.bbc-cromwell.org