

## Facing the Future on Firm Footing (Part 4)

### “The Danger Zone” (Revelation 2:2-5)

**Introduction:** When a person accepts Christ, they usually start the journey excited, going and growing. Most want to make the most of the Christian life and strive to grow and become all they can in Christ. But sometimes, the genuine joy which we feel ought to be part of the Christian life, easily slips from us. *Perhaps that’s what happened to the believers in the church of our text which caused them to leave their first love (the Lord).* Some people deal with this by continuing to go through the motions of service, and try to worship, but for some reason it doesn’t seem real anymore. Apparently, this is what they were trying to do. However, a concerned Christian may ask, “Is there some sort of safety check list that I can tap into to protect myself from slipping or at least be alerted to it happening?” Yes! beyond the obvious indications of back-sliding there are some things we should check and pay attention to, to help protect our relationship with the Lord and keep it as it should be. Today I want to give us 10 things I am titling “*The Danger Zone.*” This is a place where we find ourselves pulling away from the Lord. *I am headed for the danger zone when...*

**I. When my delight in the Lord is no longer is great as my delight in someone or something else:** (Mark 12:30; Deut 6:5), *calls for a free, unforced, voluntary, commitment to God that is personal, comprehensive, and wholehearted.*

*My first safety check is, do I love anyone, or anything more than I love the Lord?*

**II. When I no longer hunger for fellowship with God in His Word or in prayer:** (2 Tim 3:16-17; 1 Pe. 2:2)

1. **Warning** - (Mark 12:24)

2. **The promise** Ps 1:1-3

*If we are finding ourselves neglecting time in the Word of God and in prayer, I am in the danger zone of drifting away from the Lord.*

**III. When my thoughts are impure and do not reflect on the Lord:** (Gen. 1:27).

**A. Before salvation** our minds were corrupted by sin. (Rom. 12:1; 8:7; 2 Cor. 3:14; 4:4; Col. 1:21; Eph. 4:17-18) (Ps 10:4) However...

**B. Because of salvation,** our minds are changed (2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:5-6; Eph. 4:22-24) The believer is to show this (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 2:5; 4:8; Col. 3:2, 10; 1 Pe. 4:1) But it is easy to slip back into that old way of thinking.

**C. So, we have to protect our minds** – (2 Cor 10:5) *Our mind is never neutral.*

a. Negatively, the mind may be (2 Cor 3:14; 2 Cor 4:4; 2 Tim 3:8; Rom 1:28).

b. Positively our minds can be (Rom 12:2; 2 Peter 3:1; Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27; Heb 8:10).

c. Christians have "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16; Rom 12:16; 1 Peter 3:8).

*So, when my mind is doing something else, I am in the danger zone of pulling away from the Lord.*

**IV. When I excuse my displeasing behavior on only being human:**

**A. God has given us the power of His strength** Eph. 6:10; Phil 4:13

**B. God has given us the power of His Spirit** – Gal 5:16-17

*We must learn to rely on His resources instead of our own or we will find ourselves in the danger zone of walking in the flesh and pulling away from the Lord.*

**V. When I don’t willingly and cheerfully give to God’s work:**

**A. Giving to the Lord should be a blessing to you.** (2 Cor. 9:7; Lk. 6:38; Mal. 3:10)

**B. If giving to the Lord is too hard for you,** (Js. 1:17; Ps 24:1; 1 John 3:17)

*So, if you’re having trouble giving to the work of the Lord, this is a clear indication you are in a danger zone and pulling away from the Lord.*

**VI. When I don’t treat other Christians as I would the Lord:**

**A. Jesus issued a command** – John 13:34-35

**B. Jesus will issue a condemnation** – Mt. 25:40, 45 (1 John 4:20-21)

*If you find it too hard to love your brother, you’re in the danger zone of pulling away from the Lord because His love is not in or seen through us.*

**VII. When I see the commands of Christ as restrictions instead of expressions of His love:**

**A. Jesus told us** – John 14:21; Jn. 14:15; See John 4:34)

**B. The rewards of loving Jesus and obeying Him are great.**

*If we see the commands of Christ as restrictions instead of His expressions of love for a full and protected life, we are in the danger zone of pulling away from the Lord.*

**VIII. When I would rather have the approval of men than God:** *The reason this is so dangerous to us is because the world’s and God’s ways are headed in opposite directions!*

**A. John gave his readers clear warning** - 1 John 2:15-17

**B. Jesus was also very clear about us** - John 15:19 see also (Col 1:13; Jn. 15:16)

*So, if we have a stronger desire for the approval of men and the things of this world, that is a clear indicator we are in the danger zone of pulling away from the Lord.*

**IX. When I become complacent to the sinful conditions around me:**

**A. The trick** - Jesus said, (John 10:10).

**B. The truth** – When sin doesn’t bother you, it’s just a matter of time before it harms you!

Sin kills and destroys everything it touches. When we choose to ignore it or just live with it, we are in a danger zone of pulling away from the Lord.

**X. When I cannot forgive others:** (Matt 6:12)

**A. Jesus offered this explanation** - (Matt 6:14-15)

**B. Jesus was telling His disciples and us** – “If you hold grudges and unforgiveness in your heart toward those who have offended you. This will result in broken fellowship with God.

*Having an unforgiving spirit is a clear indication we are in the danger zone of pulling away from the Lord.*

*In the Christian life, there is no neutral position. We are either walking with the Lord or we are walking away from Him. Which one are choosing to do today?*