

“We Are Hard-Pressed On Every Side...”

by Bill Fairchild

Concluded from page 353702

that have and are living in this world will answer to the One true and living God (**Romans 1:18**). And then “*every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father*” (**Philippians 2:10-11**).

Yes, we are surrounded by so much that is evil, wrong and disgusting, but there is One who is greater that assures His people of His presence, love and care! God grant each of us the desire keep our eyes on Him and our hearts focused on His Word!

Will The Church Here Die?

by Wayne Goff

We don't like to think of the local church dying in any place. But the reality in America today is that only the strong churches will survive in the next decade. There are so many things working against Christianity in America — apathy and indifference by the younger generations, subtle attacks by the local, state, and federal governments, anti-Christian propaganda promoted by various special interests organizations like the Human Rights Campaign, Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), Freedom From Religion Foundation and the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN), and a lack of strong faith even among our own members.

Church attendance is sporadic, volunteers to teach Bible classes, preach sermons, clean the building, help the elderly, and care about the church in general are hard to find. Some deacons are neglecting their work, while others are being overworked. Parents are not encouraging their children to study their Bible class lessons. Some are even more concerned about their children's schoolwork, sports activities, and recreation than they are the well-being of the local church. **This is a recipe for the death of any local congregation.**

In addition to this, lies, misrepresentations, and misconceptions about the truth of the Gospel have caused many to turn away from the “*sound doctrine*” demanded by Jesus in the New Testament! “*For fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,*” (**1 Timothy 1:10**).

“*Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus*” (**2 Timothy 1:13**). Take the time to read and consider also **Titus 1:9, 15; 2:1-2**. It is common knowledge among preachers that I consider “sound” and biblically-based that the **trend** is away from Book-Chapter-Verse preaching. A subtle pseudo-Grace and subjective approach that is very friendly to denominations has slowly but surely enveloped churches of Christ in America. Sound preaching that is authoritative is supposed to be outdated and out of touch with today's reality. Too many young people have been taught that yesterday's truths are no longer valid!

The most recent “nail in the coffin” has been the Covid-19 epidemic. Local churches have struggled mightily to keep their members faithful, strong, and vigilant while being **forced by threat of disease** to “socially distance” themselves. The “distancing” causes brethren to become spiritually weak unless they put forth tremendous effort to remain strong. Jesus Christ built His church so that believers could be “*together*” to help “*one another*” as a spiritual outpost or “fort” in an otherwise antagonistic world! **Romans 12:5-16; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:16**. If Jesus Christ ordained that His people work and worship **together**, how long will it take for the church to die due to **distancing**?! The church that prays **together**, stays **together**!

concluded on page 353704