

Will The Church Here Die?

by Wayne Goff

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*“For our **citizenship** is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,” (Philippians 3:20).*

Do you think local churches do not die? Consider the seven churches in Asia listed in **Revelation 2-3** — Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. **They are all gone from the earth today!** And it is no surprise when you look at the tremendous opposition they faced in the first century — loss of love (2:4), imprisonment, tribulation (2:10), murder (2:13), false teaching (2:14-15), sexual immorality (2:20-22), idolatry (2:20), a social gospel that promoted carnal agenda over spiritual (3:1), Jewish persecution (3:9), and lukewarm passiveness (3:16).

Yet all of these things can be overcome by **strong faith** on the part of individuals and the church! *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 John 5:4).* So why did all these local churches die? Because their membership let their faith die. The churches did not die during the first generation of its membership, or even the second. Those who have helped start local churches know how much blood, sweat and tears it takes to establish a good work! Those who have sacrificed so much do not give up so easily. But their children and grandchildren who have “inherited” the local church do not always understand the sacrifice nor believe as strongly. And the church dies, ever so slowly.

Jesus takes the “*lampstand*” of Divine Identity away long before the physical church disappears. How much longer the Roanridge Church of Christ remains is up to each one of the members here. If everyone dedicates himself to a renewed zeal, determination and fervor, then it can last another twenty-five years. If we continue at the current rate, then the **sound** congregation will cease to exist soon, and a spiritual “skeleton” will take its place. It’s up to you, brethren.

Do not misunderstand this about the Church of Christ. It will never die! Jesus Christ, its Divine Builder Who is eternal, immortal, and invincible lives on as its Head until the end of time! Heaven and earth will pass away before the Church of Christ does! Heaven and earth will pass away before Jesus’ Word (the New Testament) does! But *local manifestations* of the universal church do indeed come and go. And each one of us will give an account of ourselves to God as to whether we built up the local church, or helped to bury it! **1 Corinthians 3:10-11**

May God help us!

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