

Challenges Confronting The Church

(Ezekiel 3:17-21)

- Introduction:
1. God warned us that the day would come when there would be a departure from the truth.
 - a. (2 Peter 2:1-2).
 - b. (2 Timothy 4:1-4).
 2. It is my desire to be able to say what Paul said (Acts 20:26-27).
 3. Allow me to warn you of several issues challenging the church today.

I. The Challenge Of Worship

- A. Worship has always been a playground for Satan.
- B. God's word identifies four types of worship.
 1. Ignorant (Acts 17:16-31).
 2. Vain (Matthew 15:8-9).
 3. Will (Colossians 2:23).
 4. True (John 4:24).
- C. The sovereignty of God has been displaced by the sovereignty of the consumer.
- D. Christianity is being marketed, packaged, and sold to a secular consumer — However, to do so is to remove the offense of the cross – the message of the cross is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense – it is disturbing, confrontive, and offensive to human pride.
- E. Compare “user friendly” with Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11).
- F. (Acts 10:33) We are present before God.

II The Challenge Of Preaching

- A. (2 Timothy 4:1-2; Jeremiah 5:31).
- B. Much of the preaching one hears today consists of pop-psychology, felt needs, current events, and pleasant platitudes.
- C. Truth is dispensed in such small, watered down, diluted doses it lacks the power to convict sinners.
- D. “Longwindedness” has become a greater sin than heresy.
- E. It is not so much what is being said as it is what is not being said.
- F. (2 Chronicles 34:14-15) Book of the Lord lost in the house of God.

III The Challenge Of The Woman's Role

- A. (1 Corinthians 11; 14; & 1 Timothy 2).
- B. Subjection is not culture but creation.
- C. (Galatians 3:28).

IV The Challenge Of Denominationalism

- A. (Matthew 16:18).
- B. (Ephesians 4:4; 2:15).
- C. Whether we are a part of the church that Jesus built can be validated or falsified by Scripture.
- D. (Matthew 15:13).

V The Challenge Of Baptism

- A. (Mark 16:16).
- B. (Acts 2:38).
- C. (Acts 22:16).
- D. (Romans 6:1-4; 17-18).

- Conclusion:
1. Friends, we live in perilous times when men will not endure sound doctrine.
 2. Some have crept in among us privately.
 3. What can be done?
 - a. Demand that your preacher teaches the truth.
 - b. Elders - do not allow your pulpit to be used as a platform to propagate error.
 4. The future of the church?
 - a. The firm foundation of God stands (2 Timothy 2:19).
 - b. Received a kingdom which cannot be shaken (Hebrews 12:28).