

The Brown Street Beacon

"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,

holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)



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The Church's Role in a Post-Christian World

By Jeff Smith

The phrase "post-Christian world" is at once offensive and demoralizing, but perhaps sadly accurate as well. The popularity and influence of the Christian faith has been waning ever since it reached its apex two centuries ago. Devout participation in church is becoming rare throughout Europe and secular humanism in our schools, courts and cultural fonts has emasculated a once solid religious foundation in the United States. Even as the Middle Eastern world enforces strict Muslim piety, the west is selling its collective soul to a deified environment or an idolatry of materialism. We are quickly becoming vulnerable to the devil or to a subtle Islamic invasion or to amoral atheism.

To its discredit, our society has wearied of the Bible and decided to forge ahead with a new morality that devalues traditional ethics and validates iniquity (Isaiah 5:20). Churches, challenged to survive in such conditions, fought valiantly for a while, but many have surrendered to the marketplace and adopted a much softer stance, both for Jesus and against sin.

It is not uncommon to see church advertisements that are completely lacking any reference to the Lord, instead promoting gymnasiums, daycare, banquets, dances and scout troops. Bible classes are replaced with arcade hours and, unless the snacks are free, the numbers decline. To a society that finds devout Christianity offensive and threatening, it is imperative that Church, Inc. carve out a new niche that studies the market and gives it what it wants. The church's role in a post-Christian world is perceived to be almost anything except the Lord's original intent. Sadly, the itching ears have prevailed and the denominational church has become little more than a carnal fellowship of spectators and fun-seekers (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

Churches of Christ are naturally tempted to follow suit – many already have and a few are actually leading the way. Faithful brethren, however, will insist upon soundness of doctrine and practice, regardless of their lack of appeal to a community in search of thrills and meals (1 Timothy 6:3). Sound preaching is not spiritless, but neither is it afraid to exhort and convict, labelling sin for what it is and calling its practitioners to reform (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Worship will continue to be both in spirit and in truth, without devolving into an exercise in musical or comedic entertainment (John 4:23-24). A sound church will function as an outpost of stability and truth in a world bent on self-service and convenient error (1 Timothy 3:15).

The role of the churches of Christ in a disinterested world is to continue proclaiming the gospel and seeking the few with honest hearts who will see through the flimsiness of perverted messages and obey the truth (Romans 2:8, Galatians 1:6-8). If the church changes just to survive, it won't be the church anymore but another in a long line of highly flawed denominational experiments (1 Corinthians 1:10-13) -- a real failure (Revelation 3:1-6).

THE BIBLE IS ALL SUFFICIENT

By Robert Byrd

The gospel is the power of God to Salvation.

Rom 1:16-17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for It is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

There is only one gospel.

Gal 1:6-8

6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

All scripture is inspired of God that we may be equipped for every good work.

2 Tim 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.

2 Peter 1:20-21

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

We are not to add to or take away any of God's word.

Rev 22:18-19

18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

COMMENTS:

God tells us that the bible is all we need for all of our spiritual and physical needs. It is able to save our souls, if we will be obedient to it. We need to be very careful using any material that men have written and only use it, if it does not add to or take away from God's own Words.

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