

# Dangers Facing The Church

## Introduction:

1. Dangers are a part of the reality of life.
  - a. Warning labels on nearly every product we buy.
  - b. Weather alerts tell of hazardous weather.
  - c. Even without some notice we are aware of potential dangers as we drive, fly or go certain places.
2. Warned of the dangers that God's people face.
  - a. Drifting (Heb. 2:1).
  - b. Led away by teachers of error (Acts 20:28-32; 1 John 4:1,6).
3. What could happen – the dangers could affect:
  - a. What we believe (Acts 20:30).
  - b. How we live (1 Cor. 15:33)
  - c. Strength of local churches (Acts 20:29).
  - d. Destiny of our souls (Acts 20:29-30).
4. What can we do? Watch
  - a. Mark 13:37; Acts 20:31.
  - b. Beware and be alerted to the dangers we face.

## I. Soft Preaching

- A. *What preaching should be:*
  1. Biblical in content (1 Pet. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:2).
  2. Negative & positive (2 Tim. 4:2-5).
  3. Distinctive (1 John 4:6).
- B. *Signs of softer preaching*
  1. Little or no scripture being used.
  2. Messages that say practically nothing.
  3. Sermons that are not distinctive (on a regular basis). Sermons that could be preached in any denomination in town.
  4. Vague with little or no application.
  5. Topics that deal with social topics that robs the gospel of the redemptive message.
- C. *Hard to identify and put your finger on soft preaching.*
  1. Not **what they are** saying that makes the preaching soft.
  2. It is **what they are not** saying!

- D. *Effect:*
1. Weaker Christians.
  2. Weaker churches.
  3. Tolerant environment.
  4. Fertile ground for error.

## II. Soft On Worldliness

- A. *Worldliness is participation in sin that makes us like the world around us.*
1. Immodesty.
  2. Social drinking.
  3. Dancing / going to the prom.
  4. Petting / fornication.
  5. Watching filth on TV and the movies (R, Some PG-13 & PG).
  6. Divorce.
  7. Materialism.
- B. *Signs of softness.*
1. Little or no preaching against it.
  2. Those who participate in these matters are left alone (nothing said to them about their sin).
  3. When parents, preachers & elders are doing the same!
- C. *Sin must be dealt with.*
1. Souls are in danger (1 John 2:15-17).
  2. Preaching on worldliness is part of preaching truth (2 Tim. 4:2 cf. 3:1-5, 8, 16).
  3. If we don't, it gets worse and we become shaped by the world (Rom. 12:2).

## III. Tolerant Of Error & Its Teachers

- A. *Error is dangerous and must be marked.*
1. 1 Cor. 15:33
  2. Rom. 16:17-18
  3. 2 Tim. 2:16-18
  4. 2 Thess. 2:10-12
  5. Heb. 13:9
  6. Example:
    - a. Judaism
    - b. Gnostics
    - c. No resurrection...

- B. *Efforts to be more tolerant* (i.e. of late in the divorce & remarriage controversy).
1. **Use Romans 14 to include moral & doctrinal matters (matters of faith).** Thus broadening this chapter to include more than God intended.
  2. **Using the term “False teacher” to refer to a teacher who is dishonest. It is argued that this refers to character and not merely that his teaching is wrong.** (Argue from 2 Pet. 2:1). Thus narrowing this term to exclude what God intended.
    - a. Consequences:
      - (1) Honest man cannot be a false teacher.
      - (2) Must have all characteristics of 2 Pet. 2 to be a false teacher.
      - (3) No such thing as a false teacher since no *one* teacher has all characteristics of 2 Pet. 2.
      - (4) Teacher’s attitude affects the consequences of his doctrine.
        - (a) Error still causes people to be lost (2 Thess. 2:10-12).
        - (b) Illustration: Suppose two men teach the same doctrine (that the guilty party can remarry). One is honest and sincere and the other is not. What is the consequences of each of those? If one listens to the honest man and practices what he learns he will commit adultery. If one listens to the dishonest man and practices what he learns he will commit adultery. Does the attitude of the teacher make any difference?
    - b. How do we know if one is a false prophet / false teacher?
      - (1) Warning (1 Jno. 4:1).
      - (2) Test him by what he teaches (vv. 2-6).
  3. **Point of broadening Romans 14 and narrowing the term “false teacher”: Don’t call me a false teacher and cut off fellowship, etc. just because you think my doctrine is wrong! Allow me to teach what I want!**

## IV. Families Deteriorating

- A. *Churches are as strong as the families within them.*
- B. *As the world disregards the family and God’s plan for it there is the potential to affect us* (Rom. 12:2).
- C. *What families ought to be:*
1. Husbands and wives committed to each other (Matt. 19:6).
  2. Roles are respected (1 Pet. 3:1-7).
  3. Discipline & train children (Prov. 22:6, 15).
  4. Mold family by the word of God.

D. *Churches already have:*

1. Couples with serious marriage problems.
2. Greater number of divorces & remarriage (Matt. 19:9).
3. Confusion over roles.
4. Children not disciplined.
5. Premarital relationships & children out of wedlock.
6. *Not ashamed of it!*

## V. Confusing Excitement With Edification

A. *Real edification & spirituality.*

1. Edified by the word - not excitement.
  - a. Tongues (1 Cor. 14:1-5) were exciting, stirred emotion, and had great appeal. But without interpretation, there is no edification.
  - b. Prophecy (1 Cor. 14:1-5) [revealing and imparting knowledge]. When the message was revealed they were edified!
2. Faith built by the word (Rom. 10:17).

B. *Confusion:*

1. Think when speaker is dynamic, pleasant, stirs excitement and emotions that we are really edified.
2. Think that if a class fun, exciting (good argument / discussion) that it is really edifying.
3. If we feel good about self after a sermon, service, or class that we have been edified.
4. After social events (eating, playing cards, games, having fun ) some one will say, “that was so edifying”.

## VI. Compromise With Evolution

A. *What are the compromises?*

1. There may be concern that if we don't reconcile the Bible account of creation with scientific theory, then the scientific community will have no respect for Genesis or for us.
2. So, some have forced time into account: 4.5 Billion years (plus) for earth.
  - a. Gap theory: time is place between Gen. 1:1 & 1:3.
  - b. Day age theory: time is place on each day. Each of the days of Gen. 1 are millions of years (Shane Scott).
  - c. Literal day + long gap theory: Time is placed between each day. This theory says that each day is 24 hours, but is separated by millions of years (Hill Roberts).
3. Issue: is not the age of the earth, but is Genesis account literal or not?

B. *Consequences:*

1. Puts the rest of Genesis suspect to figurative interpretation.
2. Questions the word and its accuracy
3. Undermines our faith!

C. *What does the text say?*

1. Gen. 1 says that the evening and the morning was a day. (There is nothing in context or any other to give any other idea).
2. Exo. 31:16-17 - The work week for the Jews was parallel to the creation week.
3. Psa. 33:6-9 - God spoke it and it was done. It didn't take millions of years to work itself out or settle.
4. Matt. 19:6 / Mk 10:6 - If these theories be true, then Adam and Eve were created closer to our time than at the beginning. Yet, Jesus said God made them "at the beginning".

**Conclusion:**

1. These are not all the dangers.
2. Some of these are greater for some than others.
3. Dangers can be avoided if we take heed. That's the purpose of our study.

- Outline by: *Donnie V. Rader*