

## Dangers Facing The Church

What is the greatest danger to the church today? Is it different and conflicting cultures and religions? Is it the interference of governments in deciding about what man may do and or not do religiously? In talking with individuals, some wise and some not so wise, we receive many different answers as to what is the greatest dangers among us. While all of the above, as well as some not mentioned, are dangers to the church, what is the greatest danger facing the church? Allow me to give my two-cents worth.

I believe the greatest danger is listed in the 26th book of the New Testament, **Jude**. It is one of the shortest books of the Bible — only 25 verses. It can be read in two minutes. The theme of Jude is “apostates” or “false teachers”. **Jude** sounded the alarm of the danger of “*certain men*” (**Jude 4**) in the early church with whom the faithful were to “*earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints*” (**Jude 3**).

In the New Testament times the church, as today, existed amid many different and conflicting cultures. Immorality was rampant — is it not today? In Jude’s day, society had degenerated to where “*their women, exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one for another, men with men committing what is shameful*” (**Romans 1:26-27**). The Bible condemns such. Is our 21st century different? Immorality was one of the causes of the fall of the Roman Empire.

We often speak of governmental interference in man’s religious practices. We often make the claim that the government is a serious danger to our religious freedoms. We can no longer pray before classes at school. How many controversies have arisen over the mention of God or Jesus, as if Jesus is not God, in graduation ceremonies. We have allowed the ACLU to remove any mention of the birth of Jesus in our schools and our government property. Rome allowed the existence and practice of any religion. However, once it was apparent that Christianity claimed to be exclusive, and therefore, not like the other religions, Rome persecuted Christianity (church) and it resulted in the blood of many martyrs. Rome took exception to Christianity’s claim that it was the ONLY avenue whereby man could be saved — all other religions were false.

In the book of Revelation, written in the ninth decade of the first century, Christ repeats the dangers of false teachers to three churches (**Revelation 2:1-3:22**). Five of the seven churches of Asia — Ephesus (**2:2**), Smyrna (**2:9-10**), Pergamos (**2:13-15**), Thyatira (**2:20-23**), and Philadelphia (**3:9, 11**) are mentioned as having false teachers in their midst. This was a great danger to them.

The New Testament was written during conflicting cultures, gross immorality, and grave persecution. The Roman world is much like our world of today. However, false teachers were the greatest danger to the church then, and they are today. Jude sounds the alarm of this ever present danger. Let us take heed.

- W. Terry Varner, Harmar Hill Church of Christ, Marietta, OH, via *Bulletin Digest*

*Love is a fruit for all seasons and within reach of every hand.*

### News & Notes

**CONFESSION:** Carolyn Pallard.

**CARE & SHARE BEARS:** Cancelled for this Tuesday (May 19th). Bear making will resume Tuesday, May 26th at 9:00 a.m.

**CARD SHOWER:** For Crystal Baker. Money donations will be appreciated. A basket will be in the nursery for the cards through Sunday, May 31st.

**GRADUATION BANQUET:** Saturday, May 23rd. Our graduates: Bryan Noland, Jr., Jerrica Talbott, Rachel West. Congratulations and best wishes to each of our graduates!

**PANTRY:** Toilet tissue, soap, deodorant.

**THOSE WITH HEALTH CONCERNS:** *City Hospital:* Ruby Eddy. *At Home:* Docie Moore, Dan & Sharon Williams, Jack Board, Bette Gentry, Crystal Baker, Betty Carlin, Ruth Brewer, Harry & Imogene Nice. **Remember others confined to their homes and in nursing homes. Check the bulletin board.**

## A LIVING CHURCH

### Living, vital and active churches:

- Have many people who bring their Bibles and use them.
- Are filled with praise, sounds of joy and thanksgiving.
- Usually have parking problems.
- Have lots of children and young people and noise.
- Center in on people, not problems.
- Are filled with a spirit of love for each other.
- Emphasize evangelism, discipleship and involvement.
- Have sacrificial givers.
- Have most of the people who attend Sunday morning returning for Sunday night and Wednesday night services.
- Are growing!

- North End Church of Christ, Parkersburg, WV

## Jesus!

The One who often wept (John 11:35), yet He dries our tears (Revelation 7:17; 21:4).

The One who was sold for the price of a common slave (Exodus 21:32; Matthew 26:15), yet He redeemed man from his sins (1 Peter 1:18-19).

The One who was led as a lamb to the slaughter (Acts 8:32), yet He is our Good Shepherd (John 10:11).

The One who gave His life (Galatians 2:20), and by His dying made it possible for us to be saved (Mark 16:16).

**“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.”** - Revelation 5:12

- V. P. Black, *House to House Heart to Heart*