



God's

Church Manual

Introduction

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (First Peter 4:17)

WHY THIS SERIES?

I did not want to write this series! I have put it off for about ten years. To put it off any longer would be to go against what I believe the Holy Spirit is leading me to do. If I am right, if the Holy Spirit led me to write the following articles, you should read it carefully and prayerfully.

PLAIN AND SIMPLE

The contents of this article, and those that will follow, is written plain and simple. You will not have to guess what is being said. It deals specifically with the issues facing fundamental independent Baptists. Fundamentalism as we once knew it and fundamentalism as it is today has very little in common. *“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God...”* (First Peter 4:17)

FUNDAMENTAL LEADERS HAVE CHANGED

It does not take much spiritual discernment to see that men such as Jack VanImpe, and Billy Graham, have changed from the positions they once held. To their credit, however, they are not pretending to be something they are not. They are traveling through the swamp of the present day apostasy and we all know where they stand. They once stood with fundamentalists. They now align themselves with the Pope and publicly make it known.

TIME TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR

The truth is, those of us who know what fundamentalism is have no problem expressing our views about men such as Graham, VanImpe, and other turncoats; however, the time has come to take a look at our own problems. There was a time



when being a fundamentalist meant more than having a sign in front of the church with the word “fundamental” on it. There was a time when it meant preaching the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth; however, **things have changed!**

WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE UNTO TO THE LORD?

In Ephesians 5:10 we are commanded to be, *“Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.”*

Fundamental pastors have made it acceptable for people to join God's local churches with little or no commitment to the cause of Christ. Is that acceptable with the Lord? *If it is not, why have we made it acceptable?*

Fundamental pastors have made it acceptable for a large percentage of their church members to sit in church on Sunday morning singing, *“Oh How I Love Jesus,”* and then sit at home on Sunday evening service, watching television. Is that acceptable with the Lord? *If it is not, why have we made it acceptable?*

Fundamental pastors have made it acceptable for church members to call themselves fundamentalists while missing two out of three meetings a week. That means these “fundamentalists” miss 104 meetings out of 156 that are held each year. Is that acceptable with the Lord? *If it is not, why have we made it acceptable?*

Would any pastor putting together a church baseball team allow anyone to join the team if he refused to show up for two-out-of-three games? By doing this we are teaching the young people in our churches that the local church is not as important as a ball game. **We call this fundamentalism?**

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH PREACHERS PREACHING DAMNABLE HERESY

Another reason we are in trouble is we have refused the direct command of God to separate and expose those who promote heresies. Second Peter 2:1 warns us, *“...there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”*



CHRISTIAN HERETICS

It is important to understand that the only time the New Testament speaks of heretics is when it refers to Christians preaching false doctrine.

In Second Peter 2:1, God warns us that Christians would be teaching what He calls “...*damnable heresies.*” Christian teachers would be, “...*even denying the Lord that bought them.*” Christian teachers would bring “*swift destruction*” to the cause of Christ.

HERESIES & DAMNABLE HERESIES

It is also important to understand that there is a difference between “*heresies*” and “*damnable heresies.*”

CALVINISM IS HERESY

Anyone who promotes the blasphemy that says God predestined some people for Hell is preaching heresy!

SALVATION WITHOUT REPENTANCE IS A “DAMNABLE HERESY.”

In recent years, God’s plan of salvation has been replaced with a slick soul-winning sales pitch. The Gospel is presented like an insurance policy against Hell. Lost souls are told to pray a little prayer and they will go to Heaven when they die. This is not just heresy, this is a “*damnable heresy.*” This heresy will damn a soul to Hell for eternity.

REPENT OR PERISH

Jesus said in Luke 13:3 “...*except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” He did not say simply pray for forgiveness. He said we would perish, “*except ye repent.*” Catholics are praying forgiveness prayers everyday. God is no respecter of persons. It matters not if we call ourselves Baptists or Catholics, Jesus said, “...*except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*”

It was not carnal evangelicals who first promoted the “*damnable heresy*” that repentance is not necessary for salvation, it was two men who called themselves fundamentalists. The first one to promote it was Jack Hyles, and the next was the Sword of the Lord editor, Curtis Hudson. It was fundamental Christian leaders who promoted this heresy, suggesting that Jesus did not know what He was talking about concerning repentance. It was fundamentalists that said just pray a prayer and ask



Jesus to forgive your sin and you will go to Heaven when you die.

ARE FRIENDSHIPS MORE IMPORTANT THAN DEFENDING TRUTH?

If evangelical leaders had changed the plan of salvation, fundamentalists would have had no problem exposing their heresy. Why is it acceptable to expose the errors of Jack VanImpe and not acceptable to expose the heresies of Jack Hyles?

FILLING THE PEWS AS WE HELP TO FILL HELL

Dr. W. A. Criswell was the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas Texas. The membership there grew to about 28,000 members. He said, “*I will be surprised to see twenty-five percent of my church members in Heaven.*” If he was right, 21,000 people who prayed a prayer and joined that local church in Dallas went to Hell when they died. *Is this acceptable with God?*



Since Criswell believed seventy-five percent of the people were not saved, why did he make it acceptable for them to be members? Did twenty-one thousand people who were heading for Hell believe they were on the road to Heaven because the pastor made it acceptable for them to join a Baptist church when he doubted they were saved?

DR. A. W. TOZER PUT THE NUMBER AT NINETY PERCENT

Tozer, one of the most highly respected Bible teachers who ever lived, suggested ninety percent of professing Christians are not saved.

Commenting on this problem, Lewis Sperry Chafer said, “*Too often methods have been employed requiring mere outward actions which, though sincere, may indicate no heart experience.*” He said, “*Pressure can be the chief dependence of the preacher for his apparent success in his work.*” Chafer continued, “*It is often recognized that the evangelist to be a success must possess a dominating and even overpowering personality. This with other psychological influences which are skillfully employed amount to what is almost an irresistible effect.*”





PAUL RELIED ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

We read in First Corinthians 2:4,5 that Paul said, “*And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing (persuasive) words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*”

HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTION OR MIND MANIPULATING DECISIONS?

Many modern day fundamental pastors are using cheap mind-manipulating tricks picked up from Jack Hyles at Hammond, Indiana to trick people into walking to the front of the church after a sermon.

Years ago I sat in one of his “*how to do it*” classes in Hammond. We were told to have some Christians ready to “*prime the well*” when the invitation was given. They were to walk the aisle so it would be easier for the unsaved to follow them. We were told to word the invitation in such a way that every Christian would look bad if they didn’t walk the aisle.

THERE ARE NO MIND-MANIPULATING TRICKS IN THE BIBLE

In Acts chapter two Peter preached, the Holy Spirit worked, and the people cried out in conviction saying, “*...what shall we do?*”

Peter did not use some cheap trick to get them to pray an empty meaningless forgiveness prayer. He did not get some disciples to “*prime the well*” at the end of his message to make it easier for people to get saved. People responded to the Holy Spirit when He gripped their soul with conviction through the preaching of the Word of God! As a result people were genuinely saved and unlike today’s mind-manipulated decisions we read, “*...they continued.*”

All we need to do is “*preach the Word,*” get out of the way, and let The Holy Spirit convict through the preaching of the Word. **If the Holy Spirit does not work, we must not trick people into praying.**

A. W. Tozer said, “*Whatever it may be in our Christian experience that originates outside of Scriptures should, for that very reason, be suspect until it can be shown to be in accord with them.*” Tozer continued, “*...no experience can be proved to be genuine unless we can find chapter and verse authority for it in Scriptures.*”

SOME REJECTED THE PREACHING...



Sometimes people rejected the Holy Spirit like they did when Stephen preached. He preached with the power of the Holy Spirit upon him; however, before his message was over, Stephen lay dead on the side of the road. *Maybe if he had learned a few mind-manipulating tricks, he might have survived and built a big church.*

It is only in recent years that we have stooped to replacing the power of the Holy Spirit with carnal gimmicks. Spurgeon, Moody, and all fundamental preachers of yesteryear would have risen up in protest against anyone who suggested people could be manipulated into saying a prayer to be saved. This is a damnable heresy! Why are our so-called fundamentalists silent?

THE CONTEXT OF WHAT PETER CALLED DAMNABLE HERESY

Second Peter 1:16 says, “*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” The word cunning means, “*Something crafty used in attaining an end.*”

A fable is “*A narration without solid foundation used to enforce a useful truth in the mind.*” In the context of Peter’s message we see only six verses later that there would be “*...teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies...*” Mind manipulated salvation decisions without repentance is a damnable heresy!

CHURCHES LOOKING SUCCESSFUL

A. W. Tozer said, “*A Christian congregation can survive and often appear to prosper in the community by the exercise of human talent without any touch from the Holy Spirit!*”



He also said, “...we are left to our own devices and forced to make up the lack of spontaneous worship by bringing in countless cheap activities to hold the attention of the church people.”

The Bible says in Second Timothy 3:1, “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.”

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

We will show in our future articles from First and Second Timothy, that God is not talking about *perilous times* in the world. **He is referring to *perilous times* in our local churches.**

Verse five says churches would be “...having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” We deny the power of God and have only a “form” when we replace the power of the Holy Spirit with mind-manipulating tricks to get people to pray a prayer.

Verse five, referring to the men in verse two says, “...from such turn away.” (We are not commanded to turn away from the unsaved, we are commanded to witness to them - “even unto the end of the age.”) The Bible does not say get together in meetings with disobedient Christians, and pretend there is no problem because they are your friends. It says, “...from such turn away.” (See our article on, “Whatever happened to the doctrine of separation?”)

Our upcoming articles will be an examination of today’s fundamentalism based on First and Second Timothy. (**God’s Church Manual**) We will see that our modern day fundamentalism has little in common with what is taught in First and Second Timothy.

IT WAS WRITTEN TO PASTORS

We will see that all of First and Second Timothy was written to the pastor and we as pastors would do well to let God preach it to us before we get excited about preaching it to the congregation. Should we expect our people to obey the Word of God while we refuse to obey it?

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God...”

(First Peter 4:17)

THE FIRST YEARS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AT EPHESUS

Before we look at the serious problems Timothy faced in his local church, and the serious problems we are facing today, we will take a look at how the church at Ephesus began. When Paul arrived in Ephesus, it was the second largest city in the Roman Empire. It was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. Timothy pastored in a large, and wicked city.

The main street extended from the baths to the theatre and was called Arcadian Street. There were galleries and shops all along either side of the street, which was 1,700 feet long and thirty-six feet wide. Since it extended to the harbour, it was also referred to as "Harbour Street."

Timothy must have felt inferior to the task to pastoring a local church in that city. Unlike other temples, this building was made of marble. There were 127 columns that rose sixty feet above the foundation. It housed many works of art, including four ancient bronze statues of Amazons, sculpted by the finest artists at the time. The temple was adorned with golden pillars, silver statuettes, and was decorated with many valuable paintings.



MORE INFORMATION THAN ANY OTHER CHURCH

The Bible gives us more information about the local church at Ephesus than any other church in the New Testament. **In Acts chapters nineteen and twenty**, we read of the establishment of the church. The Book of Ephesians was written concerning problems that had crept into the assembly.



The Books of First and Second Timothy were written to the pastor of the church who was given the responsibility to deal with those problems.

In Revelation 2:1-7 concerning the sad condition of the church forty years after it had been established. His rebuke was sharp. He said, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." (Revelation 2:5)

PAUL'S MINISTRY IN EPHESUS

In Acts 19:8, we read, "And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

Paul continued with his God-given responsibilities and as a result we read, "...fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." (Acts 19:17-20)

PAUL'S WARNING

Paul had a group of Believers in that local church that meant business for God. They had a sweet spirit of unity and love; however, Paul saw a danger looming on the

horizon that most of them did not see.

In Acts 20:28-32, Paul admonished the leaders to "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

PASTORS DID NOT HEED PAULS' WARNINGS

In the verses above, Paul was talking to the "overseers." He warned pastors to "take heed to yourselves." He warned pastors to "feed" the Christians in that local church. He warned pastors about the "grievous wolves" that would go after the church members. He warned pastors "night and day" for "three years," and he wept as he warned them.

The problems that arose were not taken care of quickly, and their local church was in serious trouble in a few short years. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

In Acts chapter nineteen, the church at Ephesus was in excellent health. In the Book of Ephesians, the health of the church was in declining health. In First & Second Timothy, the church was in a critical condition. In Revelation chapter two, the same church was sick unto death.

First and Second Timothy places the cause of the problem directly at the feet of the pastor.

Our Next Article

FIRST TIMOTHY CHAPTER ONE

1. Instructions concerning cleaning up the mess in the local church.
2. When to whip (like Jesus did) and when to weep (like Jesus did).
3. Three things every pastor will need when dealing with troublemakers.
4. Dealing with those who listen to troublemakers.
5. Working on the foundation of love.

OTHER ARTICLES OF INTEREST

On Our Website

Coming To Terms With The Terms



Pastor?
Elder?
Bishop?

Eventually, every pastor will be confronted with the "Elder Issue."

This article might be of help!

THE SUBJECT MOST FUNDAMENTALISTS WILL NOT DEAL WITH...

A Return To Biblical Modesty

An in-depth course on Bible modesty.

Mrs. Daphne Kirkland



Articles Are On Our "BY THE BOOK" page.

Local Church Ministries

Is An Outreach Ministry of...

