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THINGS THAT ARE UNDERMINING THE CHURCH TODAY

—by Peter Hammond

Many churches today have become lazy and blasé to the power of the Gospel and as a result, have lost their impact in this dark, immoral society. It is time for the Church to rise up, repent and correct these things that have undermined it.

1 PRAYERLESSNESS

What ever happened to the Prayer Meeting? For centuries the Prayer Meeting was an essential part of church life, an indispensable part of the weekly programme. Yet few churches today have an active, vibrant Prayer Meeting in which most members participate. *"Then Jesus told His disciples...that they should always pray and not give up"* Luke 18:1.

2 NEGLECT OF THE WORD OF GOD

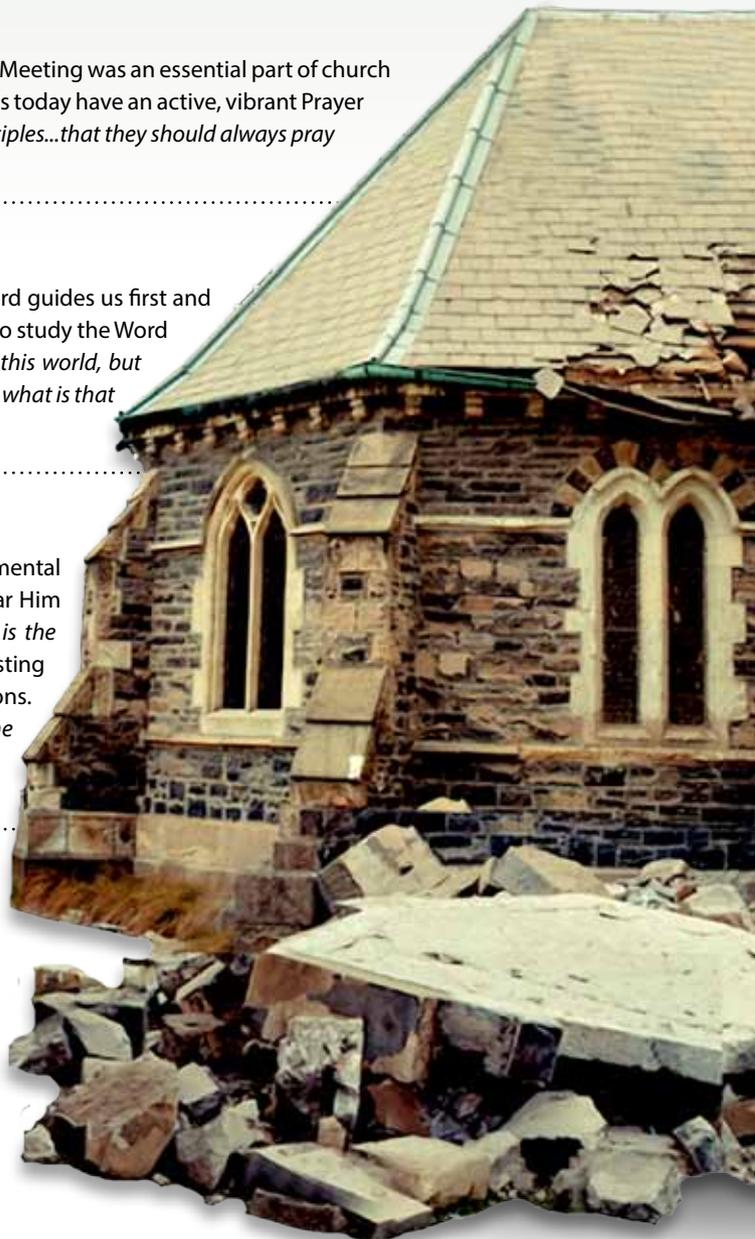
We need to know the Word of God and the God of the Word. The Lord guides us first and foremost through His Word. The best way to know the Will of God is to study the Word of God. It is our priority to ensure that we are *"...not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds, then we will be able to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"* Rom 12:2.

3 LACK OF THE FEAR OF GOD

The reverential awe, respect and fear of God must be the fundamental attitude of our Faith. Any view of God which does not lead us to fear Him and obey His Law cannot be a Biblical view. *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"* Ps 111:10. Only the fear of God can produce lasting justice and righteousness in individuals, families, churches and nations. Jesus said: *"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul, rather be afraid of the one who can destroy both body and soul in hell"* Matt 10:28.

4 EVOLUTIONISM

Evolutionism and its denial of the Creator, and therefore of accountability to Almighty God on Judgement Day, erodes the very foundations of Christian civilisation. Evolutionism destroys all meaning, purpose and justice in life. *"You came from nothing! You are going nowhere! Life is meaningless!"* Evolution is an attempt to retroactively abort God. Yet all too many Christians have bought into the lie of Evolution that erodes the foundational truths of Genesis. *"...For since the Creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His Eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse"* Rom 1:20.



5

EGALITARIANISM

The rejection of authority and lack of respect for elders produces a self-centred and selfish society. The Ten Commandments effectively forbids egalitarianism. We are not to covet what others have. We are not to steal other people's property, nor are we to dishonour our parents or other superiors. Neither may we lie, gossip or slander others. Instead of an attitude of entitlement, we need to rediscover the lost art of respect. *"Obey those who rule over you and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls as those who must give an account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you"* Heb 13:17. *"You shall rise before the grey-headed and honour the presence of an old man, and fear your God. I am the Lord"* Lev 19:32. *"The eye that mocks his father and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out and the young eagles will eat it"* Prov 30:17. »



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"Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place - unless you repent."

Revelation 2:5

6 ANTINOMIANISM

The rejection of God's moral Law inevitably leads to lawlessness, where everyone does what is right in his own eyes. *"Sin is lawlessness"* 1 John 3:4. *"The Law is Holy and the Commandment holy and just and good"* Rom 7:12. The Lord spoke the Ten Commandments with His own voice. He wrote them with His own finger upon tablets of stone. In the New Covenant, God has written His Law upon our hearts (Jer 31:33).

"Therefore the Law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by Faith" Gal 3:24. *"The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul"* Ps 19:7.

7 WORLDLY ENTERTAINMENT

We need to beware of technology encroaching on our lives. Technology is a dangerous servant and a fearful master. Has the TV become your family altar and electronic babysitter? Superficial, sensational and immoral material predominates in the modern entertainment industry and it is producing an increasingly superficial, selfish, mindless and immoral society. *"Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind..."* Rom 1:28. *"Their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened"* Rom 1:21. *"Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil"* Eph 5:15-16.

8 SECULAR HUMANIST EDUCATION

Anyone who believes that education can be neutral is mistaken. Ideas have consequences. Actions flow from thought patterns. Secular humanism is a religion which deifies man and dethrones God. All education is inherently religious, because it presents a certain perspective and selection of history, values and practices and it prescribes a worldview. *"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends upon human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ"* Col 2:8.

9 LACK OF MISSIONARY VISION

The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. The Great Commission should be our supreme ambition. The last command of Christ should be our first concern. The Church is called to be a House of Prayer for all nations. We are called to *"...disciple the nations, teaching obedience to all things that the Lord has commanded..."* Matt 28:18-20.

10 IGNORANCE OF HISTORY

Real history, told from a Biblical perspective, is a treasure of the Church that can teach us about truth that has endured. In the Scriptures we are commanded to understand the times so that we may know what we ought to do (1 Chron 12:32). We need to understand the events and issues of the past that correspond with our challenges today. To liberate our thinking from current fashions and to recognise potential potholes and traps, we need to understand the people, events and issues that shaped our past and affect our present.

History illustrates the consequences of ideas and actions. *"Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted, now all these things happened to them as examples, and they are written for our admonition..."* 1 Cor 10:6-11. ■

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