

HOW TO KILL A CHURCH WITHOUT REALLY TRYING!

Texts: Ephesians 3:21; Revelation 3:1; 3:14-18

INTRODUCTION: The Lord God Almighty wants and expects His church to bring glory to Jesus Christ! However, in many instances, the church has not lived up to this divine expectation! By every rule of measurement, the Sardis church mentioned in Revelation 3:1-6 was a fundamental church! In that Sardis church were a few people who had not defiled themselves. It had a remnant of wonderful people in it! However, to this church at Sardis, the Lord Jesus Christ said, “. . . *I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead*” (Revelation 3:1). That was the actual state of the church at Sardis and that is a factual description of many churches in many different places in this present day and time! I can truthfully say that many fundamental churches across America are undergoing a downward change or an apostasy.

Fundamental churches today are having a difficult time in getting large groups of people to attend their church services! One fundamental church after another never has any kind of an addition. In 12 months time, many churches will not see a single person saved, anyone baptized, or anyone join the church! SOMETHING IS WRONG, DESPERATELY WRONG, AND MOST CHRISTIANS, MOST CHURCHES DON'T EVEN SEE IT! (Revelation 3:17, 18) OR IF THEY DO SEE IT, THEY DON'T CARE ENOUGH TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT (Revelation 3:15, 16)!

Fundamentalism in America is in the greatest trouble in which it has ever been as far as I know. You ask, “What is the answer?” GOD! GOD AND GOD'S BLESSINGS IS THE ANSWER! GOD MUST INTERVENE! THE HAND OF GOD MUST BE SEEN AT WORK IN OUR MIDST!

I have heard about but I have not read a book called “How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying”. I have neither the time nor the desire to know what it is all about. However, this morning I want to speak to you on the subject “How To Kill A Church Without Really Trying.” After almost four decades in the gospel ministry, I have noticed, I have observed several things that people can easily do without much effort, to kill any church, no matter how good a church it is!

I. HOW TO KILL A CHURCH WITHOUT REALLY TRYING!

A. You help kill a church by being irregular in attending its services!

1. Many people do not love nor appreciate their church like they should. They take their church, their Pastor, and their friends in Christ for granted.
2. Does the Bible teach that ALL Christians should faithfully attend the house of God every time the doors are open? YES IT DOES!
 - a. Psalm 27:4
 - b. Psalm 84:1, 2, 10
 - c. Psalm 122:1

- d. Luke 4:16
- e. Hebrews 10:24, 25
- 3. Let me say that when you can spend the Lord's Day anywhere else except in the Lord's house (and it doesn't bother you enough to change) you are not being a very good Christian because you are blatantly disobeying the Scriptures!

B. You help kill a church by being indifferent to its scriptural program!

- 1. If the average workplace employee was as indifferent to his job as some Christians are to the program of God, he would have been fired long ago!
- 2. There are people in our church who for weeks and months at a time never call this preachers name, or our missionaries, or our church in prayer!
 - a. Luke 18:1 "*. . . men ought always to pray, and not to faint.*"
 - b. Romans 12:12 "*. . . continuing instant in prayer . . .*"
 - c. I Thessalonians 5:17 "*Pray without ceasing.*"
- 3. Another thing that has greatly hurt the work of God is the indifference of so called leaders (Church staff, Deacons, Sunday School Teachers, Choir members, Awana Workers, etc.) and the average Christian to the visitation and soul-winning efforts of the church.
- 4. If you want to help kill your church, just be indifferent to visitation, soul winning, and missions!
 - a. Psalm 142:4 "*. . . no man cared for my soul.*"
 - b. Jeremiah 8:20 "*The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.*"

C. You help kill a church by being insensitive to its financial needs!

- 1. Stop and think: "What kind of church would my church be if all of its members were just like me?"
- 2. God has blessed our people in a great way! You live in a good home. You drive a nice car. You have plenty to eat. You wear nice clothes. Thank God for the needs that He supplies in our lives everyday.
- 3. But many people sitting here today are robbing God! Many of you tip God!
 - a. When you eat at a restaurant you tip the waitress 10% to 15%, but some of you don't even give that much when you come to God's house!
 - b. A lot of you are tippers but not tithers!
- 4. How can you kill a church without trying? Be insensitive to its financial needs!
 - a. Leviticus 27:30 "*and all the tithe . . . is the LORD'S; it is holy unto the LORD.*"
 - b. Malachi 3:8-11
 - c. Luke 6:38 "*Give and it shall be given unto you . . .*"
 - d. Acts 20:35 "*. . . remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*"
 - e. I Corinthians 16:2 "*Upon the first day of the week [the Lord's Day] let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.*"

- i. It is personal, “. . . *Let every one of you . . .*”
- ii. It is periodical, “*Upon the first day of the week . . .*”
- iii. It is proportionate, “. . . *as God hath prospered him.*”

D. You help kill a church by being indignant toward other church members!

1. John 13:35
2. In fundamental circles, in fundamental churches, here in Liberty Baptist Church as well, there is a need for people to be kind one to another and to show love one for another!
3. This business of one Christian biting off the head of another, so to speak, has no place in the work of God!
 - a. It grieves the Holy Spirit, dishonors the Lord Jesus, and it proves that you are not a real disciple of Christ!
 - b. John 13:35
4. In Galatians 5:13-15 we read three tremendous statements about Christians and their relationships one with another...
 - a. vs. 13 “. . . *by love serve one another.*”
 - b. vs. 14 No matter how fundamental you are or how talented you may be or how pious you think you are, there is no substitute for being kind and loving to your brother and sister in Christ!
 - c. vs. 15
 - i. Every church has some old billy goat who blasts about everyone.
 - ii. And where there is a billy goat, there is usually an old nanny goat pushing him on!
 - iii. What a pitiful thing, people who are always snapping, always biting, with never a nice, kind word to say to anyone!
5. Ephesians 4:32 “*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted . . .*”

E. You help kill a church by being insolent toward its Pastor!

1. I Thessalonians 5:12,13
2. What responsibilities do Christians have toward their spiritual leader, their Pastor?
 - a. Accept him!
 - i. He is God’s gift to the church (Jeremiah 3:15).
 - ii. He has spiritual authority from the Lord (John 1:6).
 - iii. As he follows the Lord, you must follow him (I Corinthians 11:1).
 - b. Appreciate him!
 - i. That is the meaning of the exhortation “*Know them who labor among you*” (Thessalonians 5:12).
 - ii. Spiritual leadership is a great responsibility and a very difficult task.
 - iii. The battles and burdens are many, and sometimes encouragements are very few.
 - iv. It is dangerous when a church family takes their Pastor for granted, fails to pray for him, work with him, encourage him, and appreciate him!
 - (a) I Thessalonians 5:13

- (b) The church that is guilty of this will not have peace among the saints!
- c. Love him!
- d. Obey him!
 - i. I Corinthians 11:1
 - ii. Hebrews 13:7, 17

CONCLUSION: I am concerned about the growing number of churches closing their doors and the spiritual deadness that other churches are exhibiting! THE LORD JESUS DOES NOT WANT THESE THINGS TO HAPPEN TO LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH! WE MUST BE ON GUARD AND NOT LET LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH DIE! DO YOU AGREE? THEN, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO HELP ME DO ABOUT IT?