

MODERN LEAVEN AND THE MODERN LUMP

Jude 1-5; I Cor. 5:6-8

Introduction:

- A. Jude exhorted his readers to earnestly contend for the faith.
 - 1. He intended to write about salvation.
 - 2. He felt compelled to change his subject.
 - 3. His reason for changing topics. vs.4

- B. The Apostles had warned them.
 - 1. Jude 4 "crept in unawares."
 - 2. II Peter 2:1-3 "who privily shall bring in damnable heresy."
 - 3. II John 7 "many deceivers are entered in."
 - 4. II Tim. 2:16-18 Hymenaeus and Philetus "...doth eat as a canker." (cancer)

- C. Paul warned the churches against being "leavened" by evil influences.
 - 1. Church at Corinth. I Cor. 5:6-8.
 - 2. Churches in Galatia. Gal. 5:9.

- D. Jesus warned His disciples.
 - 1. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing." Matt. 7:15.
 - 2. "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod." Mark 8:15.

- E. The great truth that we must learn is to never allow ourselves to be influenced to change and to follow after that which is contrary to the Word of God.
 - 1. The influences of those on the inside.
 - 2. The influences of those on the outside.

I . THE WARNING OF JESUS TO HIS CHURCH.

- A. Jesus warned His disciples to beware of the "leaven" of their age. [cultural influences.]
 - 1. "the doctrine of Pharisees and Sadducees."
 - 2. Matt. 16:5-12.

- B. What was the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?
 - 1. Luke 12:1 "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."
 - 2. What is hypocrisy?
 - a. dialogue, playing a part.
 - b. Luke 12:2-5.

- C. Jesus warned them to beware of the influence of Herod and the Herodians.
 - 1. Mark 8:14 "beware of the leaven of Herod." vs. 15
 - 2. What is that? Mark 12: 13-17.
 - 3. The concealment of motive!

I I . THE WARNING OF NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS .

- A. Some of the warnings of Paul.
 - 1. City of Corinth, (sexual) I Cor. 5:6.
 - 2. Galatia. (religious). Gal. 5:9.
 - 3. Colossians. (philosophy, Gnostics) Col. 2:4.
 - 4. Ephesus. "Grievous wolves enter in, and also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."
 - 5. To Timothy. I Tim. 4:1-3.

- B. The warnings of James.
 - 1. James 4:4 "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."
 - 2. We can't be like the world and like God.

- C. The warnings of Peter.
 - 1. II Peter 2:1-3.
 - 2. "there shall be false teachers among you."

- D. The warnings of John.
 - 1. I John 4:1-3.
 - 2. "try the spirits, because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

III. THE WARNING OF CHURCH HISTORY

- A. The influence or "leaven" of religious Rome.
 - 1. The union of church and state.
 - 2. Ritualism.

- B. The influence of political Rome.
 - 1. The organization of the church.
 - 2. The institution of the Pope.
 - 3. Church divided, clergy and laity.

- C. The influence of social Rome.
 - 1. Infanticide.
 - 2. Drunkenness.
 - 3. The spectacular circus

IV. THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN CULTURE ON THE CHURCH TODAY.

- A. The modern leaven for the modern lumps.

- B. Culture is a potent influence.
 - 1. Today the church is intimidated by the world we live in.
 - 2. The culture is anxious to dictate our responsibilities.
 - a. Manager of Southwest Mall and problems with teenagers.

b. (see article below.)

A GIFT REGULARLY GIVEN SOON BECOMES A DEMANDED RIGHT.

A man was sitting on his porch one day when a stranger came down the street. He walked up to the man, handed him a \$100 bill and silently walked away. The next day at the same time, the man sat on the porch watching for the stranger. Sure enough, down the street he came, up to the porch, handed him another \$100 bill and walked away without a word. One full week this continued and the man never missed waiting on the porch.

On the eighth day, right on time, down the street came the stranger, but this time he passed right by the house. Up jumped the man on the porch, running and shouting after him, "Where is my \$100 bill?"

Gary Phillips

3. Cultural demands have given the church many jobs to do.

a. Schools, Hospitals, Rehabilitation centers, Recreation, Slum clearance.

The true church warns against drinking, the world cries out, "unfair!" Then they press the church to build Rehabilitation Centers.

b. Attacked South Africa, capitalism, force large denominations to divest their interests in "evil institutions."

c. In history the Lutheran church is blamed for Hitler.

4. We have come to fear our culture more than we fear God. We are afraid of its displeasure. It is like a powerful lobby. We may despise its presence and its power but our greater fear is that it will withhold its favors.

THE PILLAR "OF SALT AND OF SACRIFICE." (by: Willard A. Ransey - summer, 1986)

But today the standards are beginning to be compromised to make the churches attractive to the world and I am afraid many are deceiving both themselves and the unbelieving world by implying that now Christianity does not involve sacrifice. Yet, the Gospel and all the attendant principles of righteousness and truth are still offensive to the world. Therefore, if the church is to become attractive to the world or to the self-oriented Christian and is to sustain the euphoria, then biblical truth and righteousness are on their way out. And many conservative churches are headed for apostasy as surely as the early Catholics gradually moved in that direction for essentially the same reason.

It should not be difficult to foresee what will happen if this trend continues. The churches will become swollen with unregenerate members or weak and self-oriented Christians; and if the biblical means God has revealed in the great discipline passages of Scripture (see Matt. 18:15-18; I Cor. 5 and others) is consistently applied to sin and immorality, these self oriented crowds will seek their recreation and entertainment in another place. Those who are born again and submitted to the Word of God are drawn by the purity of a church as maintained by the formative and corrective disciplinary principles outlined in Scripture. But the self-oriented are repulsed by these same principles, hence it is obvious that a scriptural church cannot be built by a benefit-oriented appeal. Moreover, if this method is pursued, the congregation drawn together by this method is eventually destined for apostasy, because when the majority in a church becomes self-oriented that group will never again apply or allow the application of purifying biblical discipline..

It is impossible to sustain the true image of Christ and of the apostolic churches by building big, happy-go-lucky, benefit centers filled with fun facilities, wall-to-wall activities, cradle-to-grave entertainment programs, physical fitness emphases, germ-free educational curriculum, competitive sports leagues, and presenting such an "exciting" Christ that the world just could not help liking Him and flocking to Him. And flock they do, but unfortunately not to the Christ of the Bible. Make no mistake, biblical Christianity still requires sacrifice; there are no shortcuts.

B. The influence of Modern business.

1. Organization, Deacons a board of directors, the pastor, chairman of the board.
2. Drop non-productive lines.
3. Worship the God of success.

C. The influence of Psychology.

1. Psychological and Theological are not the same.
2. There is no, "Psychology of conversion."
3. Charles L. Allen, God's Psychiatry.

23rd Psalm, Lord's Prayer, 10 Commandments, The Beatitudes. Norman V. Peale, Robert Schuller, "Power of Positive Thinking". These have given us imaging, think it and it will come to pass, "think on these things."

4. The Bible does not speak of the disease of alcoholism but of the sin of drunkenness. The Bible does not speak of "Oedipus Complex", but of the sin of incest. If there is only "psychological maladjustment" and no sin, then Christ's death was in vain, He should have been crucified on a Psychiatrist's couch and not a Roman Cross.

D. The influence of Sociology.

1. Man is a social creature.
2. Man must have interaction with others.
3. Why not use this basic human need to assure the churches success? (some have)
4. Brochure of First Baptist Church, Lakewood, Calif. 2,000 in Sunday School.
5. Jesus refused to use basic human needs as a "drawing card."
 - a. John 6:1-71 (vs. 36)
6. He was "among the people."
7. Jesus immediately saw the carnal nature and its response to free food.
8. Faith and love are God's true motives.
9. Spirit and truth are the true avenues.

10. Dating Bureaus, etc. [Prayer of carnal man.]
11. Article from, "The Pillar."

E. The influence of music.

1. We have lyrics of personal love songs.
2. We have "gospel Rock." Isaiah 4:1-
3. We have the showmanship and applause.
4. We have the mega-bucks.
5. They rarely praise God!

F. The influence of false religion.

1. Charismatics = "Why does Jimmy Swaggart need an interpreter?"
2. The body worshippers.
3. Minister to the whole man.
[It is ill-advised to include a gymnasium in the plans for a church. Its value is questionable. Many churches that have them find they are a burden and a liability. Cost for maintenance is prohibitive.]
"Overseers of the Flock" by: C.B. Williamson, Beacon Hill Press, 1952. Assembly of God.
4. The words of Paul. Gal. 6:7-8 "For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."
Phil. 3:3 "have no confidence in the flesh."
5. The infirm, old, sick, the weak, the "losers" are despised by this crowd.
6. [Humanism] All of man may be saved, soul, mind, body
7. The great awakening theory. If we are awakening it is to receive Antichrist!

G. The influence of Education.

1. The concept of specialization.
2. Separate into age and need. The result is that the opportunities are lessened, not maximized, for learning. The old need the young. The cripples need the whole. The separated need the united. Singles need couples.

3. Make learning fun and not work.
4. Visual aids will solve our problems.

Teaching spiritual truth is not without its problems. Jesus did not speak in parables in order for the ignorant to learn but to further educate those who already "saw" and "heard." Matt. 13:9-16 With modern techniques there may be quicker and broader understanding of the Bible but there is a greater possibility for misunderstanding. What to us would be the single most effectual visual/audio aid? Jesus dying on the cross? What about a man recently returned from hell? Would it work? Would it convince the unbelieving? Jesus said it wouldn't!

It is possible that blindness can come from too much light. The man who walks a lonely road at midnight sees some things. He sees the rugged outlines of trees and hills and from them he gets direction. But if a bright light is turned directly into his eyes he becomes blind and stumbles. He sees no forms, no shadows, no outlines, only light, bright blinding light.

1 Cor. 1:21 "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

5. Meat and milk, beware.

H. The influence of Entertainment.

1. Radio had its effect.
2. Television.
3. V.C.R., movies, and Pizza.

On Cultural Influence, has the world affected the church more than the church has affected the world.

V. HOW CAN WE "EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH"?

- A. This is a people and not a pastoral letter!
- B. Take the Bible literally and seriously.
 1. Most people take it literally. Doctrinal statements.
 2. We must also take it seriously.
- B. Don't look for the easy way that soothes our consciences and leaves the work of God undone.
 1. "looking-up-in-the-air" attitude.
 2. "nose-to-the-ground" attitude.
 3. Jesus didn't die in bed! Neither did He before His time!
- C. Don't be concerned about our two biggest problems.
 1. Worry about failure. "What if we fail?"
 2. Worry about the many reasons we don't succeed?

- D. Don't be apologetic for other people's failure, we have done very well!
 - 1. Other people don't come because we are cold!
 - 2. Don't give because we don't need the money.

- E. Find out what the faith is.
 - 1. It is everything Jesus taught.
 - 2. It is everything Moses wrote.
 - 3. It is everything the Prophets penned.
 - 4. It is everything that the N.T. writers wrote.
 - 5. Don't pick out your favorite pieces, "the faith" is not a fried chicken.
 - 6. It is grace, immersion, security, and it is also, faith, hope and love.

- F. It is putting your hand to the plow and not looking back
 - 1. Luke 9:57-62
 - 2. "fit" = well-placed, suitable, useable.
 - 3. Occasional doesn't count.

- G. It is taking up your cross daily.
 - 1. Jesus Christ had a cross.
 - a. He did not carry it around as a symbol!
 - b. Matt. 27:32 "And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; him they compelled to bear His cross."
 - c. He was crucified upon it.
 - d. Phil. 2:8 "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."
 - 2. All of us have a cross.
 - a. Matt. 10:34-39.
 - b. Matt. 16:21-26.
 - 3. Don't use your cross as an excuse to serve yourself.

- H. It is taking the yoke of Christ.
 - 1. Matt. 11:28-30.

2. We know all about, "I will give you rest."
3. There is something else to do!
4. Become a servant of the church. (Yoke)

I. Allow the work of God to become a burden of your heart.

1. No person has ever done much for God who did not possess a burden.

2. Nehemiah had a burden to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

a. Neh. 2:1-4.

"Now I had not been sad beforetime in his presence. Why is thy countenance sad? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart."

3. Paul had a burden for Israel.

a. Romans 10:1.

"Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

4. Jesus had a burden for Jerusalem.

a. Luke 19:41.

"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it."

J. Become a servant of the church.

1. Today the primary conversation in visiting is usually selling how much a church offers.

2. Jesus wrapped himself in humility and served.

K. Let the church become a place to worship.

1. This seems to be the forgotten and the forsaken reason for its existence.

2. Do not worship idols! The church is the institution of corporate worship.

VI. THE ORDER OF GOD FOR MAN

A. Repent of your sins.

B. Trust in and believe in Jesus Christ.

C. Make your faith public.

D. Take up your cross daily.

E. Take the yoke of Christ.