

Mid-Week Connection

Connecting to God & to Each Other

This Week's Announcements

October 24, 2018

2 PM Service,

Pantry Need Pouch Pancake Mix, Corn Muffin Mix

Ladies Meeting November 18

Men's Meeting November 18

Thanksgiving meal. A sign-up list for needed items to compliment the turkey & ham see bulleting board 11/1

Why Churches Die. Part 2

There are congregations throughout this country that are every bit as dead as the church at Sardis. Like Sardis, some of them have good reputations and a great past. They assemble every Lord's Day and observe the "acts of worship" described in the New Testament (Acts 2:42). Sometimes they point back to the past and take pride in the fact that some "great" preachers used to work with them. But, like in The Wizard of Oz, you can pull back the curtain and see them for what they really are: spiritually dead.

Over the past twenty years I have had the opportunity to preach in meetings with many different congregations—some of which were dead and did not even know it.

In local congregations seldom is the "cause of death" easy to see. Most of the time it is not a single item that killed a church—it was a combination of several things that brought about their demise. I think of several congregations I know of that used to have large numbers of people assemble together every Lord's Day, but now struggle to keep the electric bill paid. As an outside observer it seems to me that all of the "dead" churches I know have several things in common, and it is these elements that I want to examine here. Some of these elements might be classified as "causes" and others as "effect."

Neglect Of Bible Classes Part 1

Neglect In The Pulpit

There are some congregations that would be content if the preacher never left the four gospels in his sermons, and sadly, there are some preachers who are willing to comply! There are some passages in the Bible that are very difficult to understand. The epistles of Paul contain doctrines "in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures" (2 Pet. 3:16). The Revelation, one of the most difficult books in the Bible, contains a blessing for the one who "reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it" (Rev. 1:3).

The purpose of our preaching is to explain the Scriptures. In the days of Nehemiah, the Levites "read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:8). As Paul preached the gospel of Christ in Thessalonica, he "reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead" (Acts 17:2-3).

Dead congregations usually have a history of "short-term" preachers, i.e., men who only stay two or three

Serving

November 4, 2018

Lords Table

Bob Baleskie*

Peter Diaz

Bill Adams

Art Candanquist

Song Service

Tim Tewalt am

Congregational Singing pm

Scripture Reading

Art Candanquist

Fellowship Meal

November 18, 2018

years before moving on. Sometimes this is because the men they asked to work with them are lazy—they have a three year supply of sermons and when that is exhausted they find it easier to move on than to study.

Lazy preachers can get by with just a few hours work a week—they reach into their file cabinet on Saturday night to find out what they will preach in Sunday morning and can spend the rest of the week playing golf or reading USA Today. They never write an article, class book or prepare any original material. Some of these men are great at having tea parties, but they usually do not know the epistles from the apostles.

Sometimes churches have a high turnover of preachers because the church is full of knuckleheads and unrepentant sinners (cf. 3 John 1:9-10). I know of a few congregations who have had five preachers in the past ten years—some men did not even stay a full year. When the truth is taught and the local Diotrephes gets his toes stepped on, the easiest thing to do is to kill the messenger (cf. Acts 7:54-60). Bickering among brethren is an infectious disease (James 3:1-12).

Neglect in the pulpit usually results in a lack of stability in a congregation and no consistency in public teaching. A new preacher does not even get a chance to know the brethren or the town before the moving van pulls up, and brethren end up hearing the same "milk" of the word without ever having the opportunity to savor the "meat" of the word (Heb. 5:12-14).



Dianne Cain, Tenia's sister.
Debbie Martin
Linda York
Jenifer Swain
Hazel Clark
Gloria Van Arsdall,
Brookside, Rm 122A.
Adam Selby
Michael Michelucci
Kim Wines
Remi Wines
Mary Steele
Ella Sullivan
Cathy Meadows
Kelly Clark
Rick Steele

Bobby Jo Henderson
Ray Stelzl
Tim Gunter
Kenny Henderson Jr.
Ruth Brooks
Jamie Shell
Marty Jones
Jamie James
Scott McCool
Jaden Turner
Doris & Donald Jones
Carol & Doug Ritenour
Dolores Williams
RSW Jail Ministry
Audrey Herring
John Woodall
WMH Rm 216

Nancy Barnes
Janet Jenkins
Jerry Eubanks
C.R. Newlin
Priscilla L
Philip Funk Jr.
Jackie Barbe
Frank Couto
Sandy Holzhauser
Vita Torres
Jeff Pingley
Wendy Willoughby
Elaine Appleton
Robert Jenkins
Philip (Pop) Funk
Lynn Care

Church of Christ

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SimpleBibleLessons.com

JOIN US!

Worship

Sunday 11 AM

Bible Study

Sunday 10 AM
2 PM

Wednesday 7 PM

1st Sunday Sing 2 PM