

Dangers Facing the Church

Colossians 1:9-14

Introduction: 2 Timothy 3:1 state, *“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come.”* 2 Corinthians 11:3 says, *“But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”* And 1 Corinthians 10:12 warns, *“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”*

The Church is facing dangers; dangers that can destroy the souls of man. Dangers that will cause divisions where once there was unity; dangers that are coming. The Church must be ready!

I. What is the role and responsibility of the Church?

A. The Church consists of individuals who have been called out of the world by their obedience to the gospel. The Church’s mission to those living in the world is well stated (Acts 26:18).

B. The goal for all its members is eternal life. As Paul eloquently stated in 2 Tim. 4:6-8.

C. We must keep the church pure (Eph. 5:27).

II. Two areas of danger.

A. Physical dangers. Saul, for example, was active in bringing personal harm to Christians (Acts 9:1).

1. The apostles taught that we should expect it (Acts 14:22). The apostles were often beaten (Acts 5:40) and all but one died a violent death.

2. Jesus taught us how to keep these physical dangers in prospective (Matt. 10:27-28). Paul said not to worry about your life but worry about your goal (Acts 20:24).

B. Spiritual dangers.

1. There always exists the reality that many will lose their souls. The question is: are we going to be one of them? Jesus said it this way, *“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* (Matt. 16:26)

2. There is an eternal consequence for sin (2 Thess. 1:6-9).

III. Two ways dangers approach.

A. Without: The world hates God’s words (John 17:14, I John 2:15-17). The world hated Jesus. It should not surprise us that the world hates us as well. That is one reason why most sound churches are small in number.

B. Within.

1. The church elders are charged to stand watch (Acts 20:28-31).
2. The church in Corinth allowed sin to enter in the form of a member who was living in adultery. Paul rebuked them (1 Cor. 5:4-7).
3. Friendship with the world is a sure way to make an enemy of God (James 4:4).
4. I'm told that a person can use a flask to drive a nail in a board. However, if you drop a lead shot in the flask it will shatter. So it can be with the local church.

Conclusion: We must be aware of the dangers that threaten the Church. The dangers are physical as well as spiritual. They come from within the church and without the church. Our responsibility is to keep the church pure.

The Lord is looking for people who want to be a part of His Church...