

The number that are in smaller Presbyterian bodies that are standing for the Lord today would not as a total come anywhere near reaching the amount that the N. Presbyterian Church has lost during the last 10 years! Why is that? It is because ministers today (most of them) have been trained in unbelief. They go into the pulpits and give the people nothing. The great mass of people do not understand what has happened. All they know is that their children are restless in church, and they themselves do not get that same joy out of it that they used to get as young people. Some of them understand and step out. Many of them who do so hunt in vain for a place where they can hear the Word of God.

Already 40 years ago I talked with a man in New Mexico who worked on repairing roads. He told me that he lived in a trailer and traveled about in that state. He was dealing with the roads in various areas, rarely staying more than a week or 10 days in the same spot. He said that every Sunday he would hunt around for a church where he could hear the Word of God. There were many churches, but he said it was very rare--not more than 2 or 3 times in the whole year-- that he succeeded in finding a church in the area he could hear the Word of God.

We hear much in these days about the spread of the use of drugs. We hear much about the increase in violence. I was reading Theodore White's account of his coming back into this country after many years as a reporter abroad. How he came to New York back in the 1950's and he lived there for about 10 years. He said when I got there I found there was an average of about 1 murder a day during my first year. But by the time I had left it had risen to an average of 4 murders a day. He had violence everywhere. The reason is that people do not know an answer to their problems. We who do know the answer, how ready we are to fritter our time away in that which builds nothing upon the foundation upon which Paul and the other Apostles had laid. How easy it is for us to neglect what God calls us to do.

In 1 Cor. 6:12-13a Paul said, Everything is permissible for me but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me but I will not be mastered by anything. Food for the stomach and the stomach for ~~book~~ food, but God will destroy them both." There is nothing wrong in satisfying your appetite for food. God has given us these bodies with certain needs and he has implanted within us the ability to get pleasure from the fulfillment of these needs. There is nothing wrong in fulfilling them, but if fulfilling them becomes an end in itself. If it becomes so much a matter of our time and energy that it keeps us from sharing the Word of God as Jesus wants everyone of His followers to do, it becomes evil.

We have in us the natural desires to fulfill the natural needs of the body. We have the desire to acquire property. The desire to earn money. It is right we should. But if it becomes an end in itself for the Christian; if it keeps him from taking time to do the Lord's work, it becomes injurious and harmful. Everyone one of us has the