

## The Church – Part 15 The Book of Acts

Let me begin today by saying that the Lord is still on the throne and the Lord still has everything under control, but the devil and man have tried to stop the Lord's work for many decades, many thousands of years, but the Lord's work goes on.

There are fundamental, independent Baptist churches carrying out the Great Commission, preaching the Word of God, standing up for the Lord Jesus Christ, preaching Christ crucified, buried, and resurrected, telling people and instructing people on how anyone can go to Heaven by trusting Jesus Christ as Savior. But let me say that, as we look at the successes of Christian churches as they proclaim Jesus Christ crucified, buried, and resurrected, there are those contemporary works today... and I'll get into more of that in just a moment. There are those contemporary works who think that they can do anything in the world by the world and in the name of Jesus Christ, acting like the world to reach people. And this is wrong.

No humanistically oriented reasoning can ever lead to true life. Proverbs 14:12 says, *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* And this is so important. This verse that I just read is repeated again in Proverbs 16:25. It says, *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

We need to quit thinking with the human brain and start thinking with the spiritual brain that God has given us as saved people. We need to start thinking spiritually in order to see more people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ instead of entertaining people. Luke 14:23 says, *And the lord said unto the servant,*

*Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.*

Many people believe that anything you do to get a person into a church is right, whether it be worldly or whatever. But the Bible teaches me that, if we do anything apart from the Word of God and we deviate from God's plan, we're wrong. And once again, Proverbs 16:25 says, *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* And that verse I read about Luke 14:23 that we're to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that the house would be full. Many people take that verse out of context believing that it means that we're to go out and compel them to come into the church.

Well, the byproduct of going out and compelling them and doing what is right and doing it right will bring them into the church. It's speaking here in Luke 14:23 of bringing them in to the Lord, giving them the plan of salvation so that they too would be able to go to Heaven one day and fill His house, not the church. Our goal should not be to fill the church, as such, but to fill the kingdom of God, to have people saved, telling them that Jesus Christ saves.

There are many churches today that have fallen prey to contemporary-ism. There are many ways that this is done, and one of the ways, I believe, it's happening and happened is through contemporary so-called Christian music. It's brought great changes to churches, and I don't mean "great" in the sense of magnificent. I mean "bad."

The late Gordon Sears had an evangelistic music ministry for many years. He ministered with Rudy Atwood. Some would remember that name. Gordon Sears was saddened before his death by the dramatic change that was occurring in many fundamental Baptist churches of his day. He warned this. He said, "When the standard of music is lowered, then the standard of dress is also lowered. When the standard of dress is lowered, then the standard of conduct is also lowered. When the standard of conduct is lowered, then the sense of value in God's truth is lowered."

Some people today, when you go into a so-called Bible-believing church, will receive an offering with ushers wearing flip-flops and shorts. Once the standard is lowered in music, you'll see this happening in many churches. People seem to go into a court of law dressed properly more so than they do in reverence to God when they go into the local church wearing flip-flops, shorts, and anything else that looks worldly, and it is worldly.

Frank Garlock of Majesty Music warns this. He says, "If a church starts using CCM, it will eventually lose all other standards." He says, "You tell me the kind of music you like to listen to, and I'll tell you what kind of person you are." Frank Garlock is the founder of Majesty Music. His son-in-law is Ron Hamilton and he is best known as Patch the Pirate. Many churches, Bible-believing, Bible-preaching churches use the program Patch the Pirate for their young people. Dr. Garlock founded the sacred music master's degree program at Pensacola Christian College.

Contemporary music... let me say this, that J. Frank Norris pastored First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. Now, I'm speaking of some of the old pillars of the faith here, and this was one of them. He pastored First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and another

church at the same time, Temple Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan, from 1934 to 1950.

After Norris, G. Beauchamp Vick pastored Temple Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan, from 1950 to 1975. Preaching in 1975 at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the BBFI... that's Baptist Bible Fellowship International... G.B. Vick said this: "It's become fashionable to use many different versions of the Bible today. Listen! This King James Version, our English Bible, the Bible of our fathers and mothers, is the one that has come floating down to us upon the blood of Christian martyrs, our forefathers. It has been, I say, the one text of the Baptist Bible College, and it will be for as long as I have anything to do with the school. Let's stick to the old Book." It's too bad that G. Beauchamp Vick doesn't head up BBC any longer. BBC now uses all different perversions and versions of so-called sacred Scripture. God help us to stand on the old tried and true King James Version of the Bible.

Some of these churches, some of the old pillars, have gone to sleep. I believe they've turned from the tried and true... New Testament Baptist Church in Miami, Florida, and Fort Lauderdale. We also see the Dade Christian School there. In 1984 the school forbade students from attending the Jackson Five concert at the Orange Bowl, and I say amen to that. School officials sent a letter to parents justifying this decision and stating that rock music is associated with dancing, drinking, the drug scene, and other unacceptable behavior.

Well, what's happening now? What has happened in the past few years? One thing that's happened in the past after 1984.... and I'm not sure what date this took place but the 4:12 Student Ministry... this is one of the

student ministries of New Testament Baptist Church... says that Lecrae has announced that he will be hitting the road with Andy Mineo and DJ Promote on the Anomaly tour. If you don't know, Lecrae is a so-called "Christian rapper," performing rap music, and it says here that 4:12... that is the student ministry of New Testament Baptist Church... "will be going on November 14. Contact us on July 24 for the presale tickets." God help us.

And then we see another pillar of the faith, Highland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Dr. Lee Roberson had pastored that church for many years. One person said this: "The last time I was through Chattanooga, I went into the old auditorium and there was a large drum set and part of it was painted black. There was a mural of Dr. Roberson and a church service in the old building blown up on the outside wall. On the other side of the wall were posters of a Christian rock concert to be held there. People dressed in wild clothes and wild hair and so forth. The bookstore was filled with the same thing."

Landmark Baptist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio... the church now features a teen ministry called Enterruption, and it's said by this teen ministry group that the purpose of Enterruption is "to create a relevant environment for students to bring their friends. We utilize a live band, secular and Christian music, dramas, skits, and a relevant message." I wonder what that relevant message is.

Bethlehem Baptist Church in Fairfax, Virginia... I believe they've changed their name now, but today and these past few years, the Bethlehem Baptist Church has much gone about as far as you can go away from its roots in the matter of standards. This letter that I'm getting ready to read part of was dated July 3,

2003, and it comes from Pastor David Stokes. I'm not sure if he's still a pastor there. The churches that I'm reading about here... things are worse today than when I wrote this. July 3, 2003, Pastor David Stokes said, "With regard to dress and modesty issues, we enforce no rule on our folks. Apparel issues are really of no concern to us." Recently, the church's name was changed from Bethlehem Baptist to Fair Oaks Church, and if you look on the Internet, you'll find that Fair Oaks Church is now a nondenominational church, and that tells me that anything goes.

Temple Baptist Church of Detroit, Michigan... I've already mentioned that to you about J. Frank Norris and G. Beauchamp Vick... is now called Northridge Church of Plymouth, Michigan. They changed the name of the church after taking a survey of the community and finding out that most people don't like the name "Baptist."

Southside Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina... this church was founded in September 1946. From 1965 to 1966 it was pastored by Walt Handford. His wife Elizabeth is one of the daughters of evangelist John R. Rice, founder of the *Sword of the Lord*. Southside was long associated with Southwide Baptist Fellowship. It was an old-fashioned, fundamental Baptist church until the 1990s. In 1993 Southwide gave up the King James Bible in favor of the NIV. Southwide Baptist Church changed its name to Southside Fellowship.

Now, next time, I'll pick up with Thomas Road Bible Baptist Church and Liberty University. I want us to look at Purpose Driven or purposely deceived.

Let's pray. Father, thank You today for loving us so much. And I pray if there's one listening today who is unsaved, may that person receive Jesus today by saying, "Jesus, save me. I want

to go to Heaven. I admit I'm a sinner. Come into my heart and save me." For Christ's sake, Amen.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.