Dangers Facing The Lord’s Church

Intro: The Bible tells of dangers which will confront the Lord’s church: Acts 20:28-32 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. 32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”; 1 Tim. 4:1-6 “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils: 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. 6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”

While these specifically refer to the first century, the principles are true for every generation, and in all generations there have been problems and dangers. Let us consider a few of the dangers facing the Lord’s church today.

I. A SOFTENING OF FUNDAMENTALS.

A. A departure from book chapter and verse.

1. This makes our appeal to the law and the testimony.
2. Isa. 8:20 “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”
3. Isa. 34:16 “Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.”

B. The gospel is God’s power.

1. Rom. 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
2. Jam. 1:21 “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

C. 1 Pet. 4:11 “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

D. A softening up of Bible fundamentals.

1. A dependancy on something else to save.
   a. Gimmicks.
   b. Entertainment.
   c. Recreation.
2. Rom. 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
3. We are begotten by it.
   a. 1 Cor. 4:15 “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”
b. Jam. 1:18 “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

4. We are saved by it; 1 Cor. 15:1-2 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; ’By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.”

5. The preaching of today.
   a. Secular poetry.
   b. Philosophy of man.
   c. Make everyone feel good (Schuler).
   d. Win friends and influence people (Norman Vincent Peale).

E. No more straightforward, distinctive preaching.
   1. A failure to speak the fundamentals but get it clouded with words.
   2. Jonah 3:2, 4 “Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.... 4And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”
   3. 1 Cor. 2:2 “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

F. A compromise with various errors and ’isms.

II. INCREASING TUG OF WORLDLINESS AT OUR HEARTS.

A. Worldliness.
   1. Mat. 13:22 “He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”
   2. Jam. 1:27 “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”
   3. 1 John 2:15-17 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

B. Materialism
   1. Luke 12:13-15 “And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. 14And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? 15And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”
   2. Mat. 6:24 “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”
   3. 1 Tim. 6:10 “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

C. New Morality.
   1. Making morals a matter of relativity.
   2. Reducing Bible absolutes to a framework of situations.

D. Wanting to be like the world.
   1. 1 Sam. 8:5 “And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.”
   2. Led to doom in Israel and will for us.
   3. Rom. 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2And be not conformed to
this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, 
and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

4. 1 Th. 5:22 “Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

III. A DESIRE TO RESTRUCTURE THE CHURCH.

A. The procedure of worship.
1. If we were to vary would they be happy.
2. Simply varying the order of services is not what they mean.

B. They seek to move the church from its distinctive position.
1. Our non-denominational stand would be exchanged for a place in the mainstream of 
religious bodies.
2. No longer teach vocal music only.
3. Lord’s Supper at any time.
4. Tolerance for other doctrines and practices without feelings for God’s views.
   a. Jude 3 “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was 
needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith 
which was once delivered unto the saints.”
   b. 2 John 9-11 “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not 
God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10If there 
come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him 
God speed: 11For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

5. No longer contend for faith, repentance, and baptism.

Conclusion: There will ever be dangers facing the Lord’s church. We must be forewarned so we will 
be forearmed.