Seven Ways To Bring Famine To The Land

Intro: There would not be many things in a land that is worse than a famine. To have a shortage of food, whether individually or as a nation, would bring disastrous results. While a dearth of food would be a catastrophe, there are other types of famines that would be far worse. A physical famine only has temporary results; a spiritual famine has eternal consequences. Let us consider seven ways to bring a spiritual famine to the land.

I. YOU QUIT STUDYING YOUR BIBLE.
   A. Only by studying God’s Word do we gain knowledge.
   B. Without knowledge of God we are destroyed.
      1. Hos. 4:6 “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”
      2. Isa. 5:13 “Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.”
      3. Jer. 4:22 “For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish [silly — NKJV] children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.
      4. Pro. 1:30-32 “They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.”
   C. Our need to study God’s Word.
      1. 2 Tim. 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
      2. Eph. 4:13-14 “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”
   D. Through knowledge of God and His Word we are saved.
      1. John 17:3 “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”
      2. 1 Tim. 2:4 “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

II. QUIT EXHORTING ONE ANOTHER.
   A. Much of preaching is exhortation.
      1. 2 Tim. 4:2 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
      2. Tit. 2:15 “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.”
      3. Acts 2:40 “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”
      4. Tit. 2:1-7 “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,”
   B. We must exhort one another.
      1. Heb. 3:13 “But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”
2. Heb. 10:24 “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
3. The apostles recognized this need.
   a. 1 Th. 4:1 “Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.”
   b. 1 Th. 5:14 “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.”
   c. 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.”

III. NEVER MAKE A PROPER CHOICE.
A. Life consist of making choices.
   1. Where we will go to school.
   2. Our life’s work.
   3. How we will treat others.
   4. Our life’s companion.
   5. These choices though often considered lightly, are far reaching and determine our successes or failures in life.
B. We also make choices spiritually.
   1. In becoming a Christian and living the Christian life.
      a. Jos. 24:15 “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”
      b. 1 Kings 18:21 “And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.”
      c. Acts 2:40-41 “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”
      d. Pro. 3:31 “Envy thou not the oppressor [man of violence—ASV], and choose none of his ways.”

IV. FORGET TO TRAIN THE CHILDREN.
A. The church has the responsibility to teach all men.
   1. Mat. 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
   2. Eph. 4:12-13 “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:”
B. However, God gives the responsibility of children and their training to the parents.
   1. Deu. 6:6-9 “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”
   2. Pro. 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
3. Eph. 6:4 “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

4. Example of Abraham: Gen. 18:19 “For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.”

V. FIND TEACHERS AND PREACHERS WHO WILL PREACH WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR.

A. It is the preachers duty to preach God’s Word.

1. 2 Tim. 4:2-4 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

2. That means preaching all of God’s Word.
   a. Acts 20:20 “And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,”
   b. Acts 20:26-27 “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”

B. Sometimes that means preaching things that some do not want to hear.

1. John 6:60, 66 “Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?... From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.”

2. Mat. 15:10-14 “And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”

C. The intent of preaching is not to win friends, but convict men of sin, and show how they might be saved from their sin.

VI. LEAVE FALSE TEACHERS ALONE.

A. We are to beware false teachers.

1. Mat. 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

2. 1 John 4:1 “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

B. If we leave them alone they will deceive many.

1. 2 Pet. 2:1-2 “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”

2. Mat. 24:11-12 “And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”

3. Rev. 12:9 “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

C. We have the responsibility to rebuke and expose them.

1. Rom. 16:17 “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.”

2. Tit. 3:10-11 “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.”
3. Elders specifically; Tit. 1:9-11 “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. 10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: 11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.”

VII. FAIL TO INDOCTRINATE JUST ONE GENERATION.

A. Adage: We are always just one generation from apostasy.

B. Examples:

1. Israel; Jud. 2:7, 10 “And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel.... 10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”

2. Eli and his sons.
   a. Eli was a righteous priest and judge.
   b. His sons:
      (1) 1 Sam. 3:11-13 “And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. 12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. 13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.”
      (2) 1 Sam. 2:12, 17, 22 “Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.... 17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.... 22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Conclusion: If we desire a spiritual famine in society or in the church, these seven ways will bring that famine. However, if we desire plenteous, then we must not allow ourselves into these habits.