

# Some Good News about the Church

## Proverbs 25:25

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. Had you rather receive good news or bad news? That is a “no-brainer” of a question, isn’t it. I believe we all would favor good news over bad news.
1. Good news about our families.
  2. Good news about our jobs.
  3. Good news about our Country.
  4. Good news about the future.
- B. The expressions, “Good news,” appears eleven times in the Bible . . . Ten times in the OT . . . one time in the NT
1. **Proverbs 25:25** – “As cold water to a weary soul, So is good news from a far country.”
  2. **Psalm 40:9** – “I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness In the great assembly; Indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD , You Yourself know.”
  3. The Four Lepers after the Syrians fled: **2 Kings 7:9** – “Then they said to one another, ‘We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, and we remain silent.’”
- C. I agree with the four lepers . . . Today is a day of good news . . . Good news about the Church, and I want to share it with you. But before I do, let me share this:
1. The fact that the church is facing some very troublesome challenges is evident, is it not?
    - a. The cultural changes in society are having its impact upon New Christianity. Some have seen as their prerogative to change the truth in favor of accommodating the masses. That is not good news, is it?
    - b. There are those who see the plea to restore primitive Christianity as impractical and irrelevant. That is not good news, is it?
  2. Like Elijah, there are some who think that spiritual Israel (the Church) has bowed the knee to Baal.
    1. Others see the church as gray and dying. I do not agree with such opinions. I will show you why momentarily.
    2. Bro. Phil Sanders, a speaker on In Search of the Lord’s Way, points out that churches of Christ actually have a larger percentage of young adults.
    3. In fact, he said, we rank #3 among religious groups having the most adults ages 18-29
    4. The next time you hear someone say that our membership is older and dying, set them straight.

5. Just look around and notice the many young families and children are present in our congregations.

## **GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE CHURCH**

- A. Brethren in our generation should be appreciative of the work of bro. Flavil Yeakley, Jr. who has been studying trends in churches of Christ for several years, is widely known throughout the brotherhood for his invaluable research.
  1. Some of his findings have brought joy.
  2. Some of his findings have challenged the church to work harder to do better.
  3. Some of his findings have brought encouragement and good news to brethren today.
- B. Encouraging news from bro. Yeakley.
  1. Churches of Christ are the **12<sup>th</sup>** largest religious group in America.
  2. We are the **6<sup>th</sup>** fastest growing religious group in America.
  3. We are **4<sup>th</sup>** in the nation in the total number of congregations.
  4. We are **5<sup>th</sup>** in the nation in number of counties in which there is a congregation of the Lord's church.
  5. We are **1<sup>st</sup>** in the nation in number of counties in which there is a congregation.
  6. We are **1<sup>st</sup>** in the nation in weekly attendance of adherents . . . **76%** of members attend regularly which is much higher than most mainline religious groups.
- C. These figures are encouraging, are they not? . . . And yet:
  1. There is much to do.
  2. There is no reason why the church should not grow as it did in the Book of Acts if we'll implement their boldness . . . Evangelistic zeal . . . And dedication.
  3. Our mission is clear . . . Our message is well-defined, is it not?
  4. Nonetheless, our enthusiasm is often suspect.
    - a. We serve the Living God.
    - b. We are empowered by His Holy Spirit.
    - c. We are redeemed, cleansed, and saved by the pure blood of Christ.
    - d. We are members of the Body of Christ . . . The Church.
    - e. We are students of the Holy, written Word of God.
    - f. We are ambassadors for Christ, commissioned by Providence to take the gospel to all the nations of the world.
    - g. We are God's servants to attend to the needs of the fatherless, the poor and the helpless.
    - h. But . . . Are we all that God wants us to be? . . . Are we doing all that God wants us to do? . . . Do we need to make changes in order to do so?

## DO YOU HAVE CHANGES

### A. **Illustration:** The Moose Hunter & Change

A couple of hunters hired an Alaskan bush pilot to drop them in a remote location, then return in seven days to pick them up. At the appointed time, the pilot arrived and loaded the hunters and their gear in the plane. "Wait a minute," said the first hunter. "What about our moose?" "Sorry," said the pilot. "We're at maximum weight already."

"But our pilot last year loaded our moose, and he had the same size plane as this one."

"Really?" asked the pilot, not wanting to be outdone. "Well, I guess we could give it a try."

With that he strapped a moose carcass on each pontoon. They sputtered to the end of the lake to get the longest possible takeoff. He shoved the throttle forward; they began to move, and finally, they lifted off the lake, just skimming the trees. But the pilot was right. They were seriously overloaded, and crashed just minutes into the flight.

Both hunters were knocked unconscious, but came to at about the same time. The first hunter looked around at the mess, moose meat and plane parts everywhere.

"Where are we?" he asked his partner.

**"About 50 yards from where we crashed last year."**

B. Moral to the illustration: Doing things the way we've always done them insures that we'll continue to get the results we've always gotten. Successful people are willing to change with the times. People who cannot or will not change, run the risk of extinction

C. In generations past, this congregation, no doubt, has done a lot of good. We are the present generation . . . Their past home runs will not win our ballgames.

1. Let us build on the foundation that others have laid before us.
2. Let uphold the Bible as the infallible Word of God.
3. Let us teach and defend the doctrine of God.
4. Let us be God's helpers in reaching out to this community . . . the State . . . to the world.
5. Let us use the remainder of our days, whether they be few or many, in being individuals and a congregations willing to do our best in carrying out the principles of New Testament Christianity.
6. And for the One who said, "I will never leave you or forsake you (**Hebrews 13:5**), may He be reassured that we, too, will never leave nor forsake Him!

D. Listening friends . . .

1. What ever changes we need to make to make all of this happen, let us be committed to making them.

2. What things we need to improve in or to make these things happen, let us do so.
3. What things we need to revive to make these things happen, let us do so.
4. Whatever we need to volunteer to do in order to make these things happen, let us do so.
5. Whatever repenting and rededicating of our lives we need to do to make these things happen, let us do so immediately.
6. **Ecclesiastes 9:10** – “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.” . . . Whatever it takes for us to be in compliance with that passage, let us do so in a mighty way . . . Yea, in the mightiest of ways!

### **CONCLUSION:**

- A. It is one thing just “to keep house.” . . . It is another to be faithful and active in the Lord’s work.
  1. The church of our Lord is not dead.
  2. The church of our Lord is still making its present known in this nation and the world.
  3. The church of our Lord in Acts 2 and in the chapters beyond that is the same church that needs to be planted throughout the world today.
  4. You are the church . . . You are the Body . . . You are God’s people to represent Him to all others of our human family.
  5. Let us keep going . . . Let us never give up . . .
    - a. Let us never be satisfied with lukewarmness when God has commanded faithfulness.
    - b. Let us not be satisfied with a little service when we can render greater service.
    - c. Let our future service be even better than our past service to Almighty God.
- B. **Ecclesiastes 9:10** – “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might . . .”
  1. As God’s Word leads . . . Follow!
  2. As our elders Lead . . . Follow!
  3. May the end of your service be even better than the earlier part of your service. You have grown, and growth implies being able to do more than before.
- C. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**