



The Full Gospel Church

Vol. VII Number 27

August 3, 2003

FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE

There seems to be a numerous problems that we all face. We have problems with the people we work with, neighbors, and in general there seems to be an escalation of wickedness all around us. We see the proliferation of evil on the television and there is no longer any television code.

We are living in the times that the Bible describes as the last days. A period of time that equals the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. We hear and see the excesses of sin and the children now pass through metal detectors before entering school. What kind of society are we living in where children carry weapons to school?

2 Timothy 3:1-9

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to

the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

2 Peter 3:1-18

1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment

FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE

and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Jesus Christ was condemned by the legal community of his day on trumped up charges just like the Christian finds themselves facing. If you don't want to go along with the world's sin and lusts you are considered an outcast. Jesus preached righteousness in his day just like the Christian preaches. We are living in a time where wickedness is considered righteous. If you are not having an adulterous affair the world thinks of you as strange. The schools teach our children to have safe sex and hand out condoms and birth control to our children. Their premise is that the kids are going to do it anyway, so why not give them some protection. We should be teaching them that if you engage in sex you need to be prepared for the outcome. If a child is conceived, then the father and the mother have committed themselves for the next twenty years.

Instead, the schools are teaching our children to be irresponsible and that there is no consequences for their sins. The Christian on the other hand realizes that there is responsibility for the decisions and actions he takes. If he fornicates with a girl he is taught that he has made a decision to spend the rest of his life with the girl. This is contrary to the thinking of the world where they feel that there are no consequences for your behavior.

Those who love the world hate the righteousness of the Christian. They see the Christian as an obstacle to the fun that they imagine that sin brings them. This hate is expressed by the actions of the world against the Chris-

FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE

tian. They see the the Christian believer as evil.

1 John 2:15-19

15 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.

16 For 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.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

When the world persecutes us for our righteousness we need to follow the examples of Jesus and the Disciples. When they were thrown into prison and persecuted, they counted it all joy to be tempted.

James 1:1-4

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

This sounds very hard but if our Lord and master was condemned to death, we will also be persecuted.

In Fox's Book of Martyrs we read of numerous saints who were persecuted by the church and the state. The one that comes to mind is Polycarp.

Polycarp, the venerable bishop of Smyrna, hearing that persons were seeking for him, escaped, but was discovered by a child. After feasting the guards who apprehended him, he desired an hour in prayer, which being allowed, he prayed with such fervency, that his guards repented that they had been instrumental in taking him. He was however, carried before the proconsul, condemned, and burnt in the market place.

The proconsul then urged him, saying, "Swear, and I will release thee;—reproach Christ."

Polycarp answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never once wronged me; how then shall I blaspheme my king, Who hath saved me?" At the stake to which he was only tied, but not nailed as usual, as he assured them he should stand immovable, the flames, on their kindling the fagots, encircled his body, like an arch without touching him; and the executioner, on seeing this, was ordered to pierce him with a sword, when so great a quantity of blood flowed out as extinguished the fire. But his body at the instigation of the enemies of the Gospel, especially Jews, was ordered consumed in the pile, and the request of his friends, who wished to give it a Christian burial, rejected.

FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE

They nevertheless collected his bones and as much of his remains as possible, and caused them to be decently interred.

We see how Polycarp followed the examples of Christ and the apostles. When he was condemned, he prayed and the guards who apprehended him repented for their part in the capture. Though they didn't release him, they were still moved by the righteousness of their prisoner.

When we have troubles with the wicked of the world, we need to follow the examples of those who have also had troubles. When the world comes crashing down on you and condemns you without cause, it is not you that they are condemning, but Jesus Christ himself.

We are in a battle against the world's wickedness and sins. Which puts us as the enemy of the ruler of this world.

Matthew 4:8-10

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

When the world rises up against you, they are just following their master the devil.

The Full Gospel Church

3014 E Street
Philadelphia, PA 19134
Church Office Phone: (215) 634-3637
Published by: Rev. LeRoy D. Cressy (215) 535-4037

Services:

Sunday School 11:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship 12:00 Noon
Sunday Evening 6:30 PM
Wednesday Evening 7:30 PM

Contact Information:

- E-Mail: leroy@lrcressy.com
- U.S. Mail:
Rev. LeRoy D. Cressy
P.O. Box 1731
Philadelphia, Pa 19105-1731