Feb. 7, 2021 a.m.

Living in a Sinful World

Reading: **1 Cor. 10:1-14**

Last sermon request from 2020

**We don’t need to see statistics to be told that we live in a sinful world.**

* I doubt Noah or Lot or Jeremiah needed to see them in their day.
* These are perilous times (like the ones Timothy was to experience) – **2 Tim. 3:1-5** – Dee Bowman said these looked like the headlines in the newspaper (this was in the 70’s) – So it is today – the more people, the more sin – the more news, the more it’s publicized.
* Sexual immorality in various forms – living together (article in 1981 WKU yearbook), homosexuality (Hallmark movies, commercial for HIV drug), rape, immodesty, porn, idolatry in many forms, gambling (Tennesseans spent 180 million on sports gambling in December), foul language, abortion – “If Planned Parenthood was killing puppies instead of babies, America would have shut them down by now.” (mostly due to sexual immorality – unwanted pregnancies), drunkenness and reveling and gluttony – eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die (this life is all there is), dishonesty, greed, selfishness, pride, false religion – too many other Jesus’ being preached, another gospel – easy, feel good about ourselves, entertaining religion – without the fight, struggle, suffering temptation
* We live in a godless age (science is god) – there is no god – no morals – truth is relative – what’s best for me – looking for the cure of the consequences but blind to the causes.

**What can we do to keep ourselves pure?** (question asked in request)

**We are to abhor what is evil and cling to what is good.** (**Rom. 12:9**)

* Like in past times, some call good evil and evil good.
* – *“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil …!”*(**Isa. 5:20**)
* Call things the way God calls them.
* We have to make choices about the forms of entertainment we are going to engage in – what we read, watch and listen to do have an impact on our minds – hate – curiosity/fascination – acceptance – practice (doing what we once hated – even preached about).We walk, stand and then sit with the ungodly, sinners, scornful. (**Ps. 1:1**)
* Constant, diligent study of the word of God – feeding on His word – looking in the mirror – examining ourselves – see our sins and be willing to do something about them.
* Be a member of a church that expects preaching on hard things.
* Elders, preachers, bible class teachers – *expose* *works of darkness* (**Eph. 5:11-13**)
* Preaching the word of God – not teaching that scratches our itching ears (ears that are tempted to listen to the words of the world – enticed, allured by the Devil)
* Discipline members who refuse to repent of their immorality. (**1 Cor. 5**)

**Praying to be delivered from temptations and looking for the ways of escape and running when we find them.**

* **Matt. 6:13; 1 Cor. 10:13-14; Genesis 20:1-6** – Do we have hearts of integrity?
* Single-minded hearts of innocence – we don’t want to be guilty!
* Do we want to avoid sin? Are we looking for the way of escape?
* Be aware of dangers – don’t play with fire – choose not to get too close – our weaknesses

**Are our close associations a help or hindrance?**

* We are in a danger zone when our best friends are not Christians.
* **1 Cor. 15:33** – Context: False teaching can lead to living immoral lives
* We need Jonathans and not Jonadabs (**2 Sam. 13**)
* Someone who will help us fight the battles with temptation.
* Jonathan and David – souls *knit* to one another, loved one another, looked out for his welfare (**1 Sam 18:1; 20:17**)
* Or a *crafty* (cunning, subtilty, deceitful) person like Jonadab who will help us sin.
* Who else is described as being *crafty*?
* **2 Cor. 11:3** – *“as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness”*
* Friends, who will warn us, even wound us.
* *“... a friend who sticks closer than a brother”* (**Pr. 18:24**)
* *“Faithful are the wounds of a friend”* (**Pr. 27:6**)

**Replace evil with good**

* It’s not enough to just avoid doing evil and pointing out how ungodly other people are.
* It’s not enough to just put off the old man – we must put on the new. (**Col. 3; Gal. 5**)
* Becoming cynical, unforgiving, unmerciful, unloving, complainers, proud (of our faithfulness) and unthankful are sinful responses to our times. (**2 Tim. 3** & **Rom. 1:31**)
* *“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”* (**Mt. 24:12**)
* We can be humble, loving, compassionate, forgiving, merciful and thankful in these times.
* We can still be good and do good in an evil world!

**Can we live for Jesus in such a time as this?**

* Was Noah faithful in his days? Jeremiah? Daniel and his 3 companions?
* Clowning in Rome (1979) by Henri J. M. Nouwen (Four lectures he gave in Rome)
* “We no longer have to ask ourselves if we are approaching a state of emergency. We are in the midst of it, right here and now, and we expect the future to mirror the past.... It is in the midst of this dark world that we are invited to live and radiate hope. Is it possible? Can we become light, salt, and leaven to our brothers and sisters in the human family? Can we offer hope, courage, and confidence to the people of this era? Do we dare break through our paralyzing fear? Will people be able to say of us, 'See how they love each other, how they serve their neighbor, and how they pray to their Lord?' Or do we have to confess that at this juncture of history we just do not have the needed strength or the generosity? How can we live in hope so as to give hope? And how do we find true joy?”

(Ken Green Facebook Post – Nov. 23, 2020)

* **Phil. 2:12-16**
* Keep obeying Jesus – work out our own salvation with fear and trembling
* Don’t murmur and argue – waste our time on things we cannot control
* Be blameless, harmless, letting His light shine through us in a dark world
* Hold fast to His word – the word of life – the word that points us to heaven