

Pleasant View Proclaimer

Pleasant View church of Christ

Troubling Statistics

March 15, 2015

Issue 204

According to the 2015 edition of "Churches of Christ in the United States" (21st Century Christian), the membership in churches of Christ in America has decreased 7.8 percent since 1990. Also, total attendance has dropped during the same period. About 870 churches of Christ that worshiped in 1990 no longer meet.

Many explanations have been offered. Here are some things to think about when considering these numbers:

(1) *All churches have lost members.* In *The Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Penny Marler notes,

"Most of the mainline denominations were all reporting a net loss over the past 30 years." Their study concluded that only 17.7 percent of Americans attend church once a week, down from over 40 percent a generation ago. Disinterest in church matters is not a problem exclusive to churches of Christ.

(2) *Apathy.* Many Christians have lost the desire to evangelize—to identify the lost and teach them the gospel. Instead, they spend time discussing the Bible with like-minded Christians or debating doctrinal differences with denominational friends. Neither activity fulfills the Great Commission.

(3) *Phony enlightenment.*

Some in the academic circles in churches of Christ have co-opted centuries-old denominational vocabulary and hermeneutics and presented them as newfound wisdom. This indoctrination has produced a generation of Christians who neither respect the authority of Scripture nor the people who taught them that word. Therefore, many members of the church have left, no longer feeling an attachment to a group that they've been taught to accuse and/or question.

If Christians keep evangelizing properly, the numbers will change.

James Hayes

Items of Note:

- Vacation Bible School will be June 21-25, Sunday through Thursday.
- Directory pictures will continue today. If you have children or you were not pictured in our last directory, please have your picture made.
- Addie Farmer is home, but very weak.
- Please pray for Mildred Walker, JW Head, Rick Reed, Judy York, Maxine Hearn, and the Newells.

Happy Haven Contribution Today Building Fund Contribution In Two Weeks

THOSE WHO WILL SERVE THE CONGREGATION

Sunday School

Read: Garrett

Pray: L. Newell

Morning Worship

Wait on the Table: JL Shelton

Serve: Demonbreum, Terry Walker, J. Walker

Pray: Billingsley

Pleasant View church of Christ
2500 Highway 49 East
P.O. Box 189
Pleasant View, TN 37146

Sunday School: 9:30
A.M. Worship: 10:30
P.M. Worship: 6:00
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm
Phone: 924-9714

*“In three words I can sum up everything I have
learned about life: it goes on.”*

Robert Frost

*“Life is what happens to you while you’re mak-
ing other plans.”*

Allen Saunders

Romans 8:31
“What shall we say to these
things? If God is for us, who
is against us?”

Consider The Source

Imagine being one of the Old Testament prophets of God. What an awesome responsibility! You are tasked with not only making predictions about the fate of those you are preaching to, but you also have to preach doctrines that might very well get you killed. You would think that prophets would be revered by the people as courageous and just, but no. You’d be reviled, persecuted, and more often than not, killed for your work. Prophets faced great discouragement on a daily basis.

Elijah was one of God’s great prophets, but he was also faced harsh criticism. Shortly before demonstrating God’s power on Mount Carmel by destroying the prophets of Baal and

Asherah, Elijah faced Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. The first thing Ahab said to Elijah was, “Is this you, you troubler of Israel?” (I Kings 18:17). What an unfounded accusation! Elijah was trying to lead the people to a closer relationship with God, but Ahab thought he was troubling Israel. To Elijah’s credit, he responded, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have...” (I Kings 18:18).

It’s been said that it takes seven encouraging statements to negate one discouraging statement. We can recover from discouraging statements quicker if we’ll consider the source of the statement. Ahab was a wicked man. Ahab’s wife, Jezebel,

was wicked. Elijah should not have taken Ahab’s criticism seriously, and he didn’t.

All criticisms are not created equally. Some come from jealous people. Others come from those who find joy in fault-finding. And some criticism comes from those who are ignorant of the facts. The jealous, fault-finding, ignorant people should not take up space in your mind and heart. Learn and respond only to those who have your best interest at heart and truly stand in a position of respectability.

James Hayes
