

Worshippers

*in the days of Noah**"...then began men to call upon the name of the LORD."* (Genesis 4:26)*"They called upon the name of the Lord..."* (Genesis 4:26)*"...and the flood came, and destroyed them all."*

(Luke 17:27)

In Matthew 24:1-3, the disciples questioned Christ concerning the end of the age. They said, "...Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Jesus summed up His discussion concerning the end of the age saying, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matthew 24:37-39)

They Called Upon The Name of The Lord And Drowned In The Flood.

Genesis 4:26, says, "...then men began to call upon the name of the Lord," and yet, Second Peter 2:5 tells us God "...spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."

The phrase "then began men" is the Hebrew word *chalah*. According to Strong's Concordance the phrase means "to profane, or to make common" the name of the LORD. We, like those in Noah's day, have done the same.

We Ignored The Warnings of A.W. Tozer.

A. W. Tozer received Christ as his personal Saviour when he was a teenager. He had no formal theological training, which may have been his greatest asset.



A. W. Tozer

On June 3, 1950, he wrote, "It will cost something to walk slow in the parade of the ages, while excited men of time rush about confusing motion with progress. But it will pay in the long run and the true Christian is not much interested in anything short of that."

Tozer authored more than forty books with a goal to impress the reader concerning the possibility and necessity for a deeper relationship with God.

He never owned a car, and even after becoming a well-known Christian author, he signed away much of his royalties to those who were in need.

Prayer was of vital personal importance for Tozer. It was said that "His preaching as well as his writings were but extensions of his prayer life. He had the ability to make his listeners face themselves in the light of what God was saying to them," Tozer died in 1963 with a simple epitaph marking his grave: "A. W. Tozer - A Man of God."

Some of His Unheeded Warnings

"The whole transaction of religious conversion has been made mechanical and spiritless. Faith may now be exercised without a jar to the moral life and without embarrassment to the Adamic ego."

"Neo-Christianity, which seems for the time to be the most popular is very careful not to oppose sin. It wins its crowds by amusing them and its converts by hiding from them the full implications of the Christian message. It carries on its projects after the ballyhoo methods of American business. The feeling that we got to make converts at any cost has greatly wounded the Church of Christ. We must present the truth as we are told to present it and let the Holy Spirit work and the individual man decide whether he will accept it or not. This soft, pussy idea that in order to keep people coming and giving and filling the seats we don't dare in any wise offend them, and we've got to make everything smooth and soft, is not New Testament."

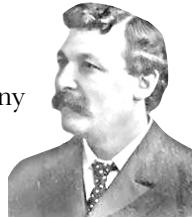
The temptation to modify the teaching of Christ with the hope that larger numbers may 'accept' Him is cruelly strong in this day of speed, size, noise, and crowds. But if we know what is good for us, we'll resist it with every power at our command. To yield can only result in a weak and ineffective Christianity in this generation, and death and desolation in the next. The crowds-at-any-price mania has taken a firm grip on Christianity and is the motivating power back of shockingly high percentage of all religious activity."

Tozer continued, "Fundamentalism has...fallen into the error of...orthodoxy without the Holy Ghost. Bible-taught but not Spirit-taught...It was religion that put Christ on the cross,

religion without the indwelling Spirit. It is no use to deny that Christ was crucified by persons who would today be called Fundamentalists."

How Did This Happen?

Gipsy Smith also saw the problem many years ago. He said, *"I am afraid that in our zeal to get people into the kingdom or the Church we have lowered the standard. I am afraid that in our zeal to get people into what we call the Church we have been more anxious about heads than hearts. In order to capture, we have compromised and lost."*



Gipsy Smith

The Shift From Repentance To Making A Decision

There is more to becoming a Christian than making a decision. Korah made a *decision* to travel with Moses and the children of Israel. Today, many people make a *decision* to travel with fundamental independent Baptist and other fundamentalists. Korah *decided* to eat the Passover. He *decided* to pass through the Red Sea with them. He was an upstanding man in the congregation of Israel. He would fit in any of our Baptist churches today and look like he was a genuine Christian.

In Numbers chapter sixteen we see Korah's true colours. He, and two hundred and fifty men with him, challenged Moses concerning his leadership. Verses 31-33 tells how God dealt with Korah. We read, *"...the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation."* Concerning the men who followed Korah we read, *"And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men..."*

Judas Made A Decision

Judas *decided* to be a follower of Christ. We see him working miracles and we see him preaching. He sacrificed much to be a disciple of Christ. He would be called a soul-winner today. He was a clean living separated follower of the Lord. He looked like a trustworthy Christian. He was chosen as the treasurer of the group. Judas made a *decision* to follow Christ; however, Judas was never saved. Judas will be in Hell for eternity.

The Temple in Jerusalem was full of people who made *decisions* for God. Paul was one of them. Martin Luther, a man totally involved in religion was a lost man. George Whitefield was studying for the ministry and spending hours in prayer before he was saved. The Great Awakening in New England began in the church pastored by Jonathan Edwards. These were church people who already considered themselves Christians.

Churches Filled With People Who Made Decisions

A recent poll indicates that 74% of Americans claim to be evangelical Christians. About 225 million Americans believe the basic facts of the gospel; however, a recent George Barna survey discovered that 84% of these people are *"ignorant of the faith."* (Baptist Bible Tribune, April 15, 1996, p. 28).

They made a *decision* to believe the Bible. They made a *decision* to pray a prayer, but are they saved? According to the survey...

- **80% - agree** *"The Bible teaches that God helps those who help themselves."*
- **69% - said Hell is not** *"a place of physical torment where people may be sent."*
- **49% -** *"The devil - only a symbol of evil."*
- **39% -** *"If a person is generally good, or does enough good things for others during their life, they will earn a place in heaven."*
- **30% -** *"Jesus Christ was a great teacher, but he did not come back to physical life after he was crucified."*
- **29% -** *"When He lived on earth, Jesus Christ was human and committed sins, like other people."*
- **29% -** *"There are some crimes, sins, or other things which people might do which cannot be forgiven by God."*
- **26% -** *"Not personally responsible to tell other people about Christ."*
- **15% - disagree that** *"The Bible is totally accurate in all of its teachings."*



"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

(Matthew 24:38,39)

Over seventy years ago, Dr. J. Gresham Machen said, *“Modern preachers are trying to bring men into the Church without requiring them to relinquish their pride; they are trying to help men avoid the conviction of sin...Such is modern preaching. It is heard every Sunday in thousands of pulpits. But it is entirely futile.”* What would he think of our *fill the pews at any cost* preaching today?

Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, *“Present-day preaching does not save men. Present-day preaching does not even annoy men, but leaves them precisely where they were, without a ruffle and without the slightest disturbance. Anyone who happens to break these rules and who produces a disturbing effect upon members of his congregation is regarded as an objectionable person.”*



When Jesus preached the result was grief or belief. There was no middle ground.

- **John 10:19** - *“There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.”*
- **Luke 12:51** - *“Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.”*

When Paul preached we read...

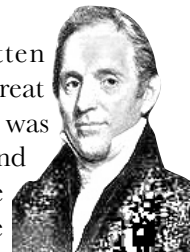
- **Acts 13:48-50** - *“...there was a division of the people...”*
- **Acts 14:4** - *“But the multitude of the city was divided.”*
- **Acts 17:1-9** - *“...moved with envy”*
- **Acts 17:1-9** - *“...troubled the people and the rulers of the city when they heard these things.”*
- **Acts 19:8-9** - *“...were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way...”*
- **Acts 28:24** - *“some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not”*

Preachers who preach the way the Bible commands us to preach will always cause people to respond for or against God. Dr. John R. Rice said, *“No need to blame Hollywood and the liquor and drug crowd for the mess we are in. Blame lies at the doorstep of sissy, compromising, back-scratching, ear-tickling preachers who know the truth yet refuse to preach it for fear of hurting someone's feelings.”*

- **John Wesley** wrote many times in his journal, *“I must preach there no more,”* Church after church closed to him. He was forced to preach in the fields because no church would have him in its pulpit.
- **George Whitefield** was driven from the churches because of his preaching.
- **Bunyan** was put into prison because he refused to compromise the Word of God.
- **Jonathan Edwards** was fired from his church for trying to get lost teenagers in his congregation saved.

Before the apostasy flooded our fundamental independent Baptist churches we examined the testimonies of those who wanted to join God's local church. Today, *decision-makers* pray a prayer like the Catholics do.

Asahel Nettleton is the forgotten instrument that God used in the great revivals during the 1800's. His method was to preach in a local church on Sunday and again on one or two week nights. He would then make himself available during the week for sinners to see him in private. Over 30,000 people were genuinely converted and remained in local churches.



Bennet Tyler and Andre Bonar wrote of the effects of Nettleton's ministry in their book, **“Nettleton and His Labours.”** Comparing his ministry with others who worked outside of the local churches, they reported the *“Fruits of these revivals were permanent. They were not temporary excitements.”*

George Whitefield

George Whitefield never gave an *“invitation”* for unsaved people to make a *decision* at any of his meetings. Decision cards were unheard of. When people were converted they made it known. When the Holy Spirit was working we did not have to go to a filing cabinet looking for a *decision* card to see if someone was saved.

Charles Spurgeon

Charles Spurgeon never allowed an invitation for unsaved people to make a *decision* for Christ in his church. Our misuse of invitations for unsaved people to make a *decision* for Christ has pushed the doctrine of repentance out of the picture. Jesus said, *“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”* (Luke 13:3)

When people repented and were genuinely converted to Christ everyone around them knew it. Today our modern day *decision* promoters tell us we can't know when people are saved. That is nonsense.

Jesus knew who was lost and who was saved. He told Nicodemus and the woman at the well that they were lost. He said Judas was *“a devil.”* He told a group of men, *“Ye are of your father the devil.”* (John 8:44). He told the thief on the cross He would see him in Heaven.

Peter knew when people were saved. He told Simon the Sorcerer that he was lost. (Acts 8:21-23). Simon had already made the *decision* to be baptized and had decided to believe the doctrines about Christ; however, he was not saved.

Paul knew when people were saved. He called some who said they were saved "*false brethren*" in Second Corinthians 11:26 and in Galatians 2:4.

The Prodigal Son & The Prodigal Pig

In Luke chapter 15, we have the familiar story of the prodigal son. He spent some time in the pig pen; however, pig food will never satisfy one of God's sheep. We read the prodigal son humbly returned to God's sheepfold and enjoyed a banquet of what he really had an appetite for.

In Second Peter 2:22, we read of the prodigal pig who was "*washed*" but returned "*...to her wallowing in the mire.*" Like a sheep in a pig pen, the pig in the sheepfold had no appetite for what sheep were feeding on. The prodigal pig returned to "*...the husks that the swine did eat.*" Jesus said, "*Wherefore by their fruits (result of their activities) ye shall know them.*" (Matthew 7:20)

In Luke 18:8, Jesus asked the staggering question, "*...when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*" In Second Timothy 3:1-7, Paul gives us a look at the condition of God's local churches at the end of the local church age.

This list is not about the condition of the world. It is about the condition of God's local churches. The things listed in these verses have always been in the world. Now our local churches are filled with people with these ungodly qualities.

Second Timothy 3:1-7

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.*

A Clear Warning Ignored

The Ark was a clear warning to the people in Noah's day, yet they ignored it. The ark, sitting in a desert, was in full view of the surrounding cities. It was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, 45 feet in height and could not be overlooked by anyone.

How many people were concerned about the warning? Only those who were involved in the building of the ark found safety in it. How many unsaved are listening to the warnings of the coming judgment of God on our world? The answer is very few.

Our Perilous Times

Today, as in the days of Noah, the prophetic warnings are as visible as a giant ark parked conspicuously in the desert. Yet, only a few *professed* Christians are stopping to see what is going on. Like the church represented in First and Second Timothy our churches have been infiltrated with...

- "Some"...*teaching false doctrine.* (First Timothy 1:3)
- "Some"...*turned aside unto vain jangling.* (First Timothy. 1:6)
- "Some"...*made shipwreck.* (First Timothy. 1:19)
- "Some"...*departed from the faith.* (First Timothy. 4:1)
- "Some"...*turned aside after Satan.* (First Timothy. 5:15)
- "Some"...*sin openly.* (First Timothy. 5:24)
- "Some"...*sin secretly.* (First Timothy. 5:24)
- "Some"...*coveted after money.* (First Timothy 6:10)
- "Some"...*erred concerning the faith.* (First Timothy 5:24)
- "Some"...*had their faith overthrown.* (Second Timothy 2:18)
- "Some"...*vessels to honour.* (Second Timothy 2:20)
- "Some"...*vessels to dishonour.* (Second Timothy 2:20)

Notice, only one out of the twelve groups represented in the local church at Ephesus were "*vessels to honour.*"

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matthew 24:37)



Investing In Eternity By Strengthening The Local Church

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God." (Revelation 3:2)

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