

A Word from the Pastor

Dear Paying Heed Saints,

In Proverbs 16:17-18 we read the following: "The highway of the upright avoids evil; those who guard their way preserve their lives. Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." In Proverbs 8:32-36 we read: "And now my children listen to me; happy are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. Happy is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord; but those who miss me injure themselves; all who hate me love death."

Jesus reminded us to love God and neighbor more than we love ourselves. Focusing on the Lord helps to abate prideful arrogance and stubborn insistence on following a pathway that leads to destruction. Such was not the case on August 29, 1782.

Because of the arrogance of the lieutenant of the watch, the HMS Royal George, the largest ship of the line ever built, sank in the harbor while being re-outfitted for service. Along with the lieutenant, some 900 persons, including 300 women and 60 children died. The Royal George was in port to be resupplied and repaired. To repair a cistern pipe, the ship had to be heeled, that is tilted to its side so that the pipe would be above the water line. In doing this, too many cannons were moved to center deck causing the ship to roll too far. Additionally, a somewhat strong breeze caused more than a usual amount of water to come in through the gun ports, thus causing it to sink. The ships carpenter tried to warn the lieutenant of the watch to beat the drum to right the ship, but the lieutenant refused twice, believing that a lowly ships carpenter knew less than he did. By the time the ships carpenter warned the captain of the ship it was too late. The Royal George sank, taking a barge that had pulled alongside with it. Many women and children were on board visiting the sailors. It is believed that 1200 people were on board. Nine hundred were drowned. Bodies washed up on shore for weeks. The ensuing court martial failed to convict the lieutenant or anyone else, but all agreed, but for the pride and arrogance of the lieutenant, the disaster would have been prevented.

We are called to place God first in our lives and to put aside our pride. Humble service to the Lord requires that we listen to the Word and take it to heart, even if we find ourselves positioned lower than we think we deserve. I pray for wisdom for you all and courage to do God's will in the face of your own desire.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Dennis