

## On the Verge of Ruin

by Dan Jenkins

So many Christians feel rather good about their spiritual lives because they attend worship on a regular basis. They partake of the Lord's Supper almost every Sunday and even come at other times depending on what else is happening in their lives. What we often overlook is that one can worship regularly, yet at the same time can unknowingly be on the brink of leaving the Lord. Solomon said it this way, "I was on the verge of total ruin in the midst of the assembly and congregation" (Prov. 5:14).

How does this happen? What is happening in the lives, and more especially in the hearts, of those who are about to fall into the depths of sin and are unaware of it? Look at Proverbs chapter five to see the four attitudes which bring this about.

**One is on the verge of ruin who hates instruction.** These very words, "hate instruction," are words of wisdom from the renowned wise king. Yet, look at what was happening even before he built the temple. "Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places" (1 Kings 3:3). He had been "raised in the church" to observe Jewish holy days. Yet, at the same time, he was worshiping idols! How could such happen? Proverbs 5:12 says he hated instruction.

**One is on the verge of ruin who despises correction.** Solomon sat in the assembly of the

congregation of Israel, yet he was on the precipice of total destruction. It is not just young people who despise the correction of parents, for many Christians are resentful of preaching that seeks to correct their own lives. Oh the folly of those who hate preaching which calls on them to turn from sin! Oh the wisdom of those who rejoice to let God correct their lives!

**One is on the verge of ruin who does not obey his teachers.** The third attribute of those who "go to church" but are unknowingly on the verge of destruction is a failure to obey teachers. If we sit in worship and the Word of God is proclaimed, we are sitting at the feet of our supreme Teacher. We must not only hear correction, we must become obedient.

One is on the verge of ruin who does not incline his ear to those who instruct him. When worshiping God, our ears must be inclined to hear. The word incline pictures one who "leans forward to be sure every word is heard." When assembled, we need to incline our ears when God speaks to us in the sermons preached.

Solomon shows four attitudes we must have when we assemble. Think about these things. Wisdom demands that we learn these vital truths. Check your heart. Are you unknowingly on the verge of destruction in the assembly of the saints?

## Who Needs the Church

by Jon Mitchell

There are many people who go through life thinking that their relationship with God is just fine while they have little or no relationship with the church. The reasons they give for staying away from the assembly range from hypocrisy, real or imagined, to the idea that they can just as meaningfully worship at the fishing hole, in the garden or on the couch. The line from the Don Williams song rings true for them: "I don't believe that heaven waits for only those who congregate." Their view of Jesus may be that he simply wanted to spread a message of love. They may see the church as a non-vital body part like an appendix that they can just as easily do without.

No one can deny that the church is an imperfect thing. By its nature it will always be imperfect because it is made up of imperfect people just like the folks who criticize it for its imperfections. But neither can one deny the church's rightful place and priority in the life of the Christian...if one believes what the Bible says. The New Testament simply knows nothing of a faithful Christian who is willfully unattached to other Christians through corporate worship and spiritual fellowship. Here are just a few of the truths that the New Testament teaches us about the church.

First, the church is the body of Christ (Col. 1:24). To cut yourself off from the church is to be cut off from the body, to be amputated. The amputated hand is not only cut off from the arm but also from the head, who is Christ (Col. 1:18). Let's be real clear. The amputated body part dies. So does the amputated Christian.

The church is also the bride of Christ (Heb. 12:22-24; cf. Rev. 21:2). Think about that for a minute. If we are part of the church, we are part of the bride of Christ. So if we leave the church, what are we doing? Aren't we basically walking out on Christ? Ending our spiritual marriage to him? (Rom. 7:1-4)

The apostle Paul said that the church is the place where God is glorified (Eph. 3:21). If one leaves the place where God is glorified, how does that one going about glorifying God? Isn't it a sign that this person is more concerned with what they want than what God wants?

Paul also called the church the household, or family, of God (1 Tim. 3:15). To leave the church is to leave God's family. It is to be the prodigal son or

daughter (Luke 15:11-32). And until we, like the prodigal son, "come to our senses," we'll be sloppin' with the pigs.

Peter called the church the possession of God (1 Pet. 2:9). If we decide to no longer be a part of the church, we decide to no longer be part of what God owns. Therefore, we are striking out on our own, being on our own man or woman rather than God's. That might sound good for a while, this independence, but as far as eternity goes it is the last place we want to be.

Finally, Paul said that Jesus is the Savior of the church (Eph. 5:23). Do you want Christ to be your Savior? Do you want him to save you from an eternity in hell? If you do, then you need to be in his body, the church...because he is the Savior of the church. The church is who he saves. Back in Noah's day, there was only one place to be if you wanted to avoid drowning...in the ark. Today, there is only one place to be if you want to avoid hell...in the church of Christ.

The church isn't perfect as it exists on the earth. We've already established that fact and that's news to no one. But it is perfect in its design because God is its Designer. God created it with the realization that it would be populated by imperfect people. A few of those imperfect people may be insincere hypocrites who have no interest in being truly transformed. God knows who they are. But the rest of them are conscientious men and women who are acutely aware of their own sin and shortcomings. They know they are not perfect in and of themselves. But they also know they are perfected by the One who is. So they stay with his church. You would do well to stay with it too.

Otherwise you'll spend longer than you bargained for with those hypocrites you allowed to keep you from the church.

# Correspondence/Encouragement

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### **WVBS Online School**

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## Mission Works

### **Westhill Works**

Benevolence Program

### **Local Works**

Cherokee Children's Home - [www.chc4kids.org](http://www.chc4kids.org)  
House to House, Heart to Heart  
In Search of the Lord's Way  
Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies  
The Truth in Love - [www.ttil.tv](http://www.ttil.tv)  
WVBS Online School - [school.wvbs.org](http://school.wvbs.org)

### **Prison Works**

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

### **Foreign Works**

Four Seas Bible College, Singapore - Peter & Pooi Fun Chin  
New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

## Leadership

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Paul Stewart - 903.872.3464  
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Billy Roughton - 903.654.4032  
Dickie Russell - 903.874.4457  
David Shastid - 903.257.6464  
Brent Stewart - 903.641.9052  
Justin Williams - 903.875.8288

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Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)  
Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

# Prayer List

**Continue to Remember:** Gwen Culwell, Gayle Garner, Neta Marshall, Velma McDougald, Bud Moore, Henry & Eula Parrish, Barbara Shore, Mollie Southard, Paula Spillyards, Patty Williams, Mary Barham, Anna Bolton, Meagan Gould, Frankie Torres

**Service Men:** Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart, Morgan Weaver, and Payton Weaver

# Announcements

**Welcome, Briggs Family!** We are excited to have Chad, Shelby, Tatum, Reece, and Gentry back with our Westhill family. Their address is 405 E. 4th Ave., Blooming Grove, TX 76626.

**Congratulations to our 2016 Graduating Seniors:** Tyler Baumgartner, Callie Bearden, Carter Bearden, Alex Cuellar, Seth Haden, Zack Lewis, Brody Owens, Alex Pimentel, Zoey Rios, Austin Roughton, Dalton Shastid, and Keller Southard.

**“To Our Westhill Family:** We would like to thank all of you so much for the wonderful ice cream party. Thanks to all who were involved in the planning and participation of the party. Even though we had no electricity, the “candle-lit” room was beautiful. An amazing sight we shall never forget. Thanks, too, to all who signed our photo mat. We enjoy all the names and messages. Thanks again for loving us and wishing us well as we begin another time in another place. We look forward to seeing you all again on future visits.” Love to all & God bless! James & Sue Welch

**Bountiful Baby Baskets** at the back of the auditorium for Gina Orosco and baby. Gender neutral gifts appreciated. Baby is due May 16.

**Open Door Thursday** 3:30-6:30 PM in the Outreach Center for Jr. High and High School.

**Register Now** for the 2016 WOW Ladies’ Retreat - September 23-24 at the Summers Mill Retreat Center in Salado, TX. Jeanny Gilpin of Salem, VA will speak on “Mary in a Martha World.” Cost: \$65 for room and 2 meals; Optional \$12 for T-shirt.

**Senior Graduation Banquet** Thursday, May 26 at 6:30 PM. **Please, sign up at the back of the auditorium.**

**Youth Mission Trip** forms and payment are due May 15.

**Camp Ida Forms** are available on the desk at the back of the auditorium. Forms & payment are **due to the camp by May 25.** Camp Dates: June 12-17

## Birthdays This Week

May 9 - Collin Barham, Cohen Drain, Reese Jones  
May 11 - Levi Haden, Rachel Handley  
May 12 - Travis Huckaby  
May 14 - Justin Mahoney

## Next Week’s Adult Class

Who Is the Greatest?  
(Mat. 18:1-20; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38-39)

## Records for May 1, 2016

Bible Class .....	156
AM Worship.....	240
PM Worship.....	155
Wednesday .....	163
Contribution .....	\$9,231.50

## Privileged to Serve

<b>Song Leader</b>	Zach Drain
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Micah Haden
<b>Communion Leader</b>	Paul Ross
<b>Communion Servers</b>	
Scott Barham	David Baumgartner
Joshua Haden	Seth Haden
Jimmy Horn	Don Ivy
Zack Lewis	Justin Mahoney
Rusty Owens	Aubrey Parrish
Paul Stewart	Robby Thomas
Mike Wylie	
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Bryan Bearden
<b>Nursery</b>	Claire Haden & Julie Hand
<b>Security</b>	Scott Barham, Terry Barrett, Zach Drain
<b>PM Song Leader</b>	Tyler Baumgartner
<b>PM Opening Prayer</b>	Hank Jett
<b>PM Closing Prayer</b>	Larry Rowden
<b>Wed. Song Leader</b>	Justin Williams
<b>Wed. Devotional</b>	Billy Roughton
<b>May Contact Elder</b>	Darwin Thomas - 903.695.0176