

John Newlin Ministries

Sign of the Times: AN ABUNDANCE OF OFFENSE

Way back in the 1800's and early part of the 1900's, as I understand, at least in some places pastors in churches preached the word boldly. And then some of them applied the truths of God they had preached to the specific congregation itself as appropriate. And they applied it to local and national happenings and issues in the times they were living. That was the right thing to do. I think most people expected that. After all, those who were in the churches were hoping to learn and to live by God's law, by his commands.

Today, so many of our individual churches do not delve deeply into God's word, preferring to stay on the surface, or to focus on the tried and true few verses that most people know, or to talk about cultural or motivational issues. Those that go beyond, especially those who apply God's word to situations of the day, risk a pretty violent reaction. Reporters may show up. People who are "tolerant" of just about everything in our modern society are most assuredly to be offended. So too all those who believe there is no absolute truth, only relative truths.

As we edge ever closer to that wonderful return of the Lord and his collecting his believers, and as we see the prophecies being fulfilled and heed the warnings of the Lord to stay alert, to watch we are not deceived, and so on, we set ourselves up to offend others.

In this ministry as long as I preach and write on divine healing, there are those who want to hear and to come (and also those of course who can't conceive of such a thing, believing incorrectly all the miracles and the gifts of the spirit and such disappeared after the first century).

When I preach and teach more about the fullness of Jesus and all he did, who he is and such, well, it seems it is more difficult to gather a crowd. So many think they know it all when they say he took care of our sin and brings us forgiveness and eternal life. And they miss so much.

When I speak of his imminent return, well, there are those who reply people have always said that. There are those who can't conceive that the Bible really is absolutely true and that things are indeed happening and about to happen. So many don't come because they either are not interested or are frightened by it all.

And then when I apply all the prophecies of the Bible to be fulfilled before the Lord's return and note what is happening in society, it seems even more are offended. They ask to be removed from the newsletter list. **They prefer to be comfortable in their views than uncomfortable in God's truths.**

It is true. I see it with the newsletters I write. I see it in the donations and how they dwindle when a subject causes people to be uncomfortable.

But we press on, not doing all we would like because we don't have the funds, but doing all we can with what we have. I think many God expects to contribute just do not do so, being interrupted by events of the day and the cares of this world.

The facts are simple:

- We really are at the end of the church age.
- Jesus really is about to return.
- A lot of unpleasant things are happening and about to happen.
- From his warnings and advice, it is apparent that true believers in Jesus – members of His CHURCH (the only one that counts) will be taken out of harm's way sometime before the terrible wrath of God explodes in the Tribulation period.
- Things may likely get much worse here for believers before the Lord collects us and takes us out of here.
- Many people – certainly by far the majority of society – prefer the approval of secular society, of the mass news media, of the ever growing national government, of their neighbors and friends – to following the truths of God. Even so, the Bible warns us to let God be true and every man a liar. His word trumps all.
- The Lord himself warns more than once that the number finding the way to life (with him, with his father) is few indeed.

Some time ago the Lord made it really clear to me that I should preach and teach about him and about his return. Even healing services in his priority system take a second place to that. Of course divine healing is part of who he is and thus appropriately part of any program focusing on the Lord. But at this point in history what does it matter if people are healed but do not know Jesus? So they can be physically and emotionally whole as they enter hell?

I still enjoy healing. But in the last two years as we have planned activities and discussed events, Jesus has clearly guided me more to the focus on himself and his return. About two years ago I actually felt a need to say to him in prayer – “We’re holding a Day of Healing on such and such a date...Is that all right?” and I received the shocking reply – “If you want to.” No longer his top priority. Getting as many of those who are supposed to be his and go with him when he comes – that is his top priority. Unfortunately this all has not dawned on most people.

My advice to you in the midst of the confusion that is modern life on earth today is to stay alert and focused on Jesus and all he is and all he has done for you and all believers. That way you should be able to avoid all that is coming on the earth as well as participate in God's leading others to Jesus. As our banner says:

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus!

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