

(SUNDAY MORNING AT RAPID CITY, S.D. DECEMBER 28, 1969)

1. In this decade three men of high office in the United States, one of them the president of the United States, have been assassinated.
  1. This is some indication of the venomous ill-will abroad in our country.
  2. Whether you agree with the philosophy, politically or other wise of these men, we are forced to admit that such assassinations in any country and especially in America pictures for us a new low in moral ethics.
  
2. When nations forget God.      Psalms 9:17; "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."
  1. What an awful turing. Think on three things:
    1. Who will be returned? The wicked - All nations that forget God.
    2. Turned where?      Turned into hell
    3. Why turned?      Because they, Forget God."
  2. To the individual who goes not in the direction that God points and in the way that God has revealed a terrible pay-day is going to come.
  3. When nations trample on the principles of the Almighty, the immediate as well as the ultimate result is that the world is beaten with many stripes.
    1. We have seen nations forget God and slide into Gehenna and the smoke of their torment has gone up and is going up before our eyes day and night.
  4. To the home or nation that has no room for Christ, death and grave cloths are certain and sure. So let me repeat:
    1. To the nation or individual who forgets God, who walk not in the old paths as Jeremiah 6:16 reveals the Lord requesting, "Stand ye <sup>in the ways,</sup> and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein," To such pay-day is coming some day.
  
2. In this decade, the past ten years we have witnessed a crescendo of criticism against the church as the world sees it today. I am ashamed to admit that much of this criticism is justified.
  1. A baseball fan's most frustrating experience is to see his team's power hitter strike out when the bases are loaded and the runs are needed to win. Some one has said:
    1. That the church is at bat in a bases-loaded situation today...
    2. The world is the Satan powered pitcher...
    3. And the church is on the verge of striking out.
  2. Again some one has likened the present day church to a football game with it players on the field and spectators in the stands;
    1. There are eleven weary men on the field striving to play the game according to the rules for each man knows that with just one foot out of bounds the touch down is called back.
    2. The fans, thousands of them, are in the stands screaming and even criticizing the tired weary players, the referees and all who seem not to be doing things, <sup>as</sup> the crowd sees them. This reveals the attitude of many toward the church,



WHAT THE SIXTIES HAVE SEEN2. CRITICISM AGAINST THE CHURCH, Continued. Why some criticism is justified:1. The charge of some critics:

1. Some charge that the contemporary church is no church at all, at least not in the New Testament sense say they. In this they are right but not many of them know:

1. What the New Testament church is.

2. And it is sadder still that by far the most would have no part of it if they knew. Not many are willing to be bound by such New Testament statements as are found in Romans 12:1,2; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17.

2. L. Nelson Bell writing in Christianity Today of October 10, 1969 reported a Youth meeting with the theme RECONCILIATION. According to Mr. Bell the effort was:

1. Not reconciliation of men with God, but

2. Reconciliation of the church with the world. How it is: 2 Cor. 5:18,19  
"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) <sup>to</sup> witt, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself..."

3. So it is not as the world would have it: reconciling God, Christ and the church to the world but the world to God, Christ and the church.

3. Much confusion in the world.

1. In the jargon of our times we are continually buffeted by such terms as:

1. RELEVANCE generally meaning the the Bible is not relevant to our day.

2. TELLING IT LIKE IT IS which may be good <sup>if</sup> it is true to what the Bible has to say.

3. DOING YOUR OWN THING which means that self-centeredness is the order. No regard for any one else and no care whether "Your own thing" is right or wrong.

4. The Bible teaches many "hard truths," truths that run counter to our natural inclinations and desires.

1. Some of the teachings of Jesus are of this sort, "hard!" On one occasion after he had uttered some of these "hard" saying we are told that many of the disciples turned away from him and followed him no more. John 6:66-69

5. Much criticism arises at Christmas Time.

1. Many complain that "it is time to put Christ back in Christmas."

2. They know not what they say. Christ was born several centuries before what the world knows as Christmas came into being.

1. The abbreviation for Christmas is: Xmas.

2. In algebra "X" is one of the unknow quantities.

3. That "X" might well represent Christ today in the lives and experiences of many: Christ is unknown.

3. WHAT WE NEED TODAY AMONG PEOPLE

1. We need a revitalization of early day New Testament Christianity.

2. We need a renewal of faith in God and his word

3. We need men and women, boys and girls, with faith enough and love enough in their hearts to walk in God's way.

4. We need people, lots of people, who would be willing to make some sacrifice in their lives that they might walk in God's way.

