



Counsel | Seminars | Training

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### *People Spot Missile: Are you in the Game?*

Several years ago a new football coach arrived at a Division 1 school. His theme was, “are you in the game?” There were billboards around the metropolitan area. There were rumors that he was going to leave for another job. Irritated by the rumors, his players showed up for practice except no one had on their practice uniforms. The coach asked, “What is going on here?” The spokesmen for the players stepped up and said, “We want to know, are you in the game?” He knew what they meant. Was he going to stay with the team for the long haul or was he using the players to get a better job. They had a right to know. This is a difficult time for Christianity. It’s politically correct to belittle the Christian faith. The question is, “Are you in the game or are you hiding in the stands where no one can see you?”

Peter was asked. “Aren’t you one of his?” He responded. “I never knew him?” How many times have we consciously or unconsciously did exactly what Peter did? Praise God for His forgiving spirit.

The focus has to be a commitment to the Gospel and ministry to people. Elton Trueblood, scholar of another generation said, “The greatest hypocrisy of all is to accept the salary as a Christian minister and not believe the gospel.”

We are certainly in turbulent and challenging times. The political system has become dysfunctional. The word compromise is now obsolete. This belligerent attitude has now infected the church. It is not the spirit of Christ. It is something very different from that.

The economic system is fragile. In spite of proclamations that we are in recovery, there are still responsible persons fearful that another shoe will drop. People who once counted on overtime to balance their budgets, are now drowning. People who lost a good job and replaced it with another at a significantly lower pay scale are hurting. The small entrepreneur who made a good living for himself and one or two employees is now crunched and some have lost their businesses. All of this has impacted the finances in church.

The spiritual state of the country is in turmoil as well. So many Christians are saying, it doesn’t matter which road you take to the top of the mountain as long as you get there. That is not Biblical. Unfortunately, many Christians are not reading their Bibles. They are not taking the time to learn basic Biblical truths that impact and affect our lives. When they are confronted with divergent points of view, they don’t know what Jesus or the Bible would say.

The last two missiles talked about ministry of caring and logistical dynamics that truly impact churches. This is even more basic than those. It is a commitment to Biblical Christianity. The Bible is true for any era. You think people have changed? Really? Go back and read Leviticus 18 written 3,500 years ago and tell me what is new. The fact is sin is sin in any millennium. It is true that technology has changed. The style of living in civilized countries has changed. But people are the same.

Steve Green wrote the following words:

“Everyday they pass me by,  
I can see it in their eyes.  
Empty people filled with care,  
Headed who knows where?

On they go through private pain,  
Living fear to fear.  
Laughter hides their silent cries,  
Only Jesus hears.

People need the Lord, people need the Lord.  
At the end of broken dreams, He's the open door.  
People need the Lord, people need the Lord.  
When will we realize, people need the Lord?”

The time has come for Christians to stand up and be counted. We need to spend time in prayer, in significant Bible study, and fellowship with other believers. Christianity is not a spectator sport. There is no room in the stands. You have to get on the playing field. Peter emerged from the horrible betrayals of Maundy Thursday to become the leader of the Church. Legend says he died crucified upside down because he did not feel worthy to be crucified as his Lord had been.

Jesus asked the disciples, “Who do men say that I am?” and then “Who do you say that I am?” That question rings down through the centuries. Every human being must answer in one way or another. What is your response?

Frances R. Havergal wrote the following:

Who is on the Lord's side?  
Who will serve the King?  
Who will be His helpers  
Other lives to bring?  
Who will leave the world's side?  
Who will face the foe?  
Who is on the Lord's side?  
Who for Him will go?  
By Thy call of mercy,  
By Thy grace divine,  
We are on the Lord's side, Savior, we are Thine.

***A Thought: “...But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” Joshua 24:15***

*I am now available to present “The Role of the Church in the Civil War”, “Starting a New Service”, “Churches Have Personalities”, “People Spots”, “Does Your Church Really Care About People?” and “A Christian Perspective on Leadership Skills.” “Stewardship and Managing Debt” jm*

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