

Good News & Bad News



David Wilkerson November 1, 1978

The good news first! And, I'll tell you why. I find that people all over the nation are hungry for good news. There has been such a constant barrage of bad news, any good news seems like a ray of sunshine on a dark day. Sometimes we see only the bad side of things and forget that all around us, every day beautiful and uplifting things are happening. Let me share some of the good news we need to be reminded of.

1. THE DIVORCE RATE IS LEVELING OFF AND MAY SOON REVERSE ITSELF.

Studies reveal that in recent months, the divorce rate has tapered off, and, in some areas of the country, it is actually reversed. Even more startling, experts tell us that nearly 20% of those divorced are now remarrying their former mates.

It is also most encouraging to see the new trend in professional counseling. Just a few years ago, numbers of experts were advocating extramarital affairs, easy divorce, sexual experimentation and changing of partners. There has been a sudden change of direction. Now, the experts are calling for a return to old values. Marriage to one partner is finally winning out as the only satisfying way to find peace and fulfillment. For example, two well-known authors, experts on marriage counseling, recently married after living together for nearly two years. They said they discovered they, too, wanted to experience the old-fashioned joy of being faithful to one partner.

2. THERE ARE MULTIPLIED THOUSANDS OF HAPPY MARRIAGES, AND THEIR NUMBERS ARE GROWING!

Sometimes I get discouraged by all the talk about divorce and broken homes. If we are not careful, we depress ourselves by thinking that the majority of marriages are unhappy and troubled and headed for divorce. Not so - at all!

This was made very real to me in a recent crusade. Sitting in the front seat were two beautiful people, both of whom were in their late fifties. The husband sat all through my crusade, holding onto her as if she were his most precious treasure. She kept smiling up at him throughout the meeting. I could lip-read his constant reminder - "I love you." I was so blessed by it all, I stopped the meeting and asked them publicly how long they had been married. "Thirty-three years, he answered with a big smile, "and it's getting better all the time." I felt impressed to ask the entire audience for a show of hands by all couples who had been happily married for at least ten to twenty years. Hundreds of hands were raised. The love between those many husbands and wives was so powerful, so beautiful, the audience wept.

Thousands of people that night realized what the Holy Spirit was saying - There are millions who have not bowed their knees to Baal. An army of faithful husbands and wives are growing stronger in their love and care of each other. Satan will never be able to destroy their homes and marriages. Their love is a constant thing, renewed daily by the super-natural power of God. All marriages are not ending in divorce. the majority of Christian marriages will continue to be happy and strong.

3. TEEN-AGERS EVERYWHERE ARE EXPERIENCING A HUNGER FOR CLEAN AND WHOLESOME VALUES!

It's true that many teen-agers drink and abuse narcotics. Others are godless and wild. But, in my travels across this nation, I sense a growing hunger for a return to solid, old-fashioned values. This is not a shallow religious kick. It is not a surface kind of fad that will soon pass away. It is actually a revolution, of sorts.

For the first time in years, unwed mothers are once again feeling sorrow for their actions. Teen-agers are learning once again to blush. Girls now want more than just a weekend of sex and booze. Now, they are demanding commitments from their boyfriends - and faithfulness. No lifetime commitment - no sex. Fewer and fewer are living together without marriage. "Live in" arrangements have caused more jealousies, more fights, more hassles than marriage. Girls are getting smart - they now understand why young men prefer to just live together. It's so they can walk out and pick up with another girl when they get bored. That scene is changing rapidly. Watch your social pages in the newspapers next May, June and July. I predict an increased number of weddings.

Also, these newly married young people are fed up with divorce. They suffered through the divorce of their own parents, and they are deciding to work harder at making their own marriages work. I am more encouraged than at any time in my ministry because our young people are so down on divorce and so high on marriage, now. Pregnancy outside of marriage is out! Lifetime commitments are now in! Thank God for this new trend.

And now the bad news!

1. GET YOUR OLD "VISION" BOOK OUT AND RE-READ IT - TROUBLED TIMES ARE JUST AHEAD.

Do I still believe a severe recession is coming? A housing slump? A drop in auto sales? Massive strikes? runaway inflation? Collapsing money markets? A Wall Street panic? Bankrupt cities? Layoffs? Unbelievable increased interest rates?

YES! Absolutely! Already, Europeans are calling the dollar, "Paper money." That's exactly what they called the German mark just prior to the Great Depression. Carter's program to shore up the dollar and the economy will not work over the long range.

Gold, once over \$200 an ounce, fell to \$100 (a drop of \$100 per ounce). Gold is again climbing, and peaked recently at over \$230 an ounce. This dramatic increase represents only the panic in people's hearts. Gold has no intrinsic value. The Bible is filled with accounts of societies throwing gold on the streets as worthless during times of crises. Gold is not a hedge against anything. It is a panic commodity that feeds on fear. Christians are warned in the Bible against trusting in it.

In my view, we are right on the brink of the most severe recession since the Great Depression. Soon Christians will no longer be able to ignore my kind of message. It won't be long until everyone will be heeding warnings about preparation.

2. A GROWING NUMBER OF CHURCHES AND SPECIAL MINISTRIES WILL GO BANKRUPT.

For the past few years, I have been begging my fellow ministers to avoid debt. I've warned against borrowing millions of dollars to finance huge building projects and unrelated programs. I have appeared on almost every Christian television talk program and have warned the godly directors against launching expensive programs totally unrelated to their original call. I respect these men of God, but I cringe when I see them asking for multiplied millions to build schools, colleges, expanded headquarters, retirement centers, retreat facilities, etc., etc. I have told them to their faces that the time will come when they may have to suffer and their funds could be drastically cut.

I also grieve to see the growing number of ministers buying or leasing private jets. This is a day in which all of us as ministers should be cutting back in our life styles - and should be willing to give up our little empires and work just with people. Already, unfinished buildings sit idle, rotting away, with no funds to finish them. The ministers are developing ulcers and heart pains. They worry and fret. They are forced to beg and plead for additional funds, until it begins to turn off their most loyal friends.

Right now, five major churches are bankrupt. Many others are on the brink. Some of these pastors are my dearest friends - and they are nervous wrecks. In spite of all of this, others continue to borrow multiplied millions to build expensive buildings and to expand their facilities. They are running all over the nation, trying to borrow millions of dollars. It hurts me when they tell me I just lack faith. It is not a lack of faith - I believe God is going to crucify all my ego trips, as well as those of all other ministers and evangelists.

Our little empires are going to come tumbling down. Our big budgets are going to be cut to the bone. We will be forced back to simple New Testament methods. And we are going to be surprised at how much more we can do with so much less.

One last warning to all who will heed: Get your house in order! Get clear of debt. Make do with what you have. curb your sppetites and get your eyes off buildings and material things. Get involved only in people and their needs.

3. EVEN CHRISTIANS WILL SUFFER - BUT GOD WILL NEVER FORSAKE ANY OF HIS CHILDREN - AND NOT ONE WILL EVER HAVE TO BEG FOR BREAD.

God has promised that even though His children will always live with suffering, they need never fear. God will protect and feed them through every crisis. Hard times can only turn out for the good to all who trust in the Lord. Easy living has put too many souls to sleep. We are going to experience a good shaking. We will all be tested - but it will be good for our spiritual lives. It will bring people back to prayer; believers will be prodded back to their Bibles. Love for one another will grow, and our common needs will bring us together. We are going to have to learn to trust in the care of Jesus on a daily basis. The church will experience a genuine awakening. God's people will turn away from materialism and trusting in worldly things.

Afraid of depression - strikes - earthquakes - bankruptcies - wars and rumors of wars? Not for one moment! Perfect love casts out all fear. We are told to rejoice when we see all these things coming to pass. Let no trusting child of God be overcome with fear or anxiety. God still has everything under control.

A closing statement - I have had a special meeting with all those who work with me in this ministry. As a result, luxury cars are being traded for economy cars in some cases. Associates have offered to reduce their salaries, even to the point of working without wages, when and if necessary.

We have stopped all building. We are determined to make do with what we have. We are not going to beg for money, and we have pledged to put every dollar received directly into helping reach and save lost young people. We need only \$35,000 to close out the year completely in the black. We have joined prayer that God will help us wipe it all out, and from that point on, we will do nothing without cash in hand. Your help is really needed.

How beautiful that so many friends care. I am one minister who refuses to get an ulcer or a nervous breakdown, as a result of debt or over-extension. I am very content simply ministering to the needs of people. My eyes are not on buildings and big headquarters - I'm focusing all my time and attention on helping lonely, hurting people who need help.

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