

## **The Struggle To Maintain The Sanctification Of The Church**

**Sanctify-1. To make, render, or declare sacred or holy.  
2. To separate from things profane and dedicate to God.  
(Thayer's Greek Lexicon, p.6)**

**Secularization-To render secular; convert from sacred to secular use; make worldly.  
(Britannica Dictionary, p. 1153)**

**John 17:16-21 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.**

**James 4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?**

### **I. The Third Century Church Absorbing The Pagan Culture**

**"From its foundations the Church had gradually absorbed the best of life, the organizations, the institutions, the laws, the learning, and whatever else of good worth there was in the Roman empire. What the Church thus took to herself she transformed and sanctified, so though Roman in its source, it was Christian in its form, influence and tendencies. To the treasures of ancient civilization the Church joined the great and luminous truths of God's revelation."**

**(The History of The Church, B.J. Spalding, p.379)**

**"In the late third century came the first deliberate attempts by Christian missionaries to 'baptize' features of pagan religions, and thus overcome them by absorbing them into Christianity."**

**(The History of Christianity, Fortress Press, p. 81)**

### **II. The Church In 1906 Absorbing Culture**

**"There are two different interpretations of the church which inevitably came into conflict. There were those who believed the church should move on with the world and adapt the spirit of the New Testament to conditions that were ever changing. They held that when not forbidden by New Testament, they were free to adapt their program to changing needs. On the other hand, there were those who believed the pattern of the church was fixed for all time, and the fact that certain things were not sanctioned was sufficient ground for rejecting them."**

**(The Disciples In Kentucky, A. W. Fortunes, pp. 364-365)**

**Revelation 22:18-19** For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

**1 Corinthians 11:2** Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.

**2 Thessalonians 2:15** Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

**2 Timothy 1:13** Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

**"The Christian Church emphasizes society and the physical man by appealing to the carnal nature, with church carnivals, bands, plays, choruses, dramatics, church kitchens, church camps, and elaborate fellowship halls; the church of Christ does not. (1 Cor. 10:7; Rom.14:17; 1 Cor.11:22, 34)"**  
**(*Why I Left the Christian Church*, Floyd A. Decker, 1944)**

### **III. The Church Absorbing Culture In Our Generation**

**"Our churches are filled with adults whose parents "back home" do not understand the changes sweeping through the church. One generation negotiates the process of change with another. Such negotiation is not always easy or painless."**  
**(*The Crisis of Change*, Larry James, p. 5, Image Magazine, Vol. 6-No. 2)**

**"Some of the ways we have been content to look at Scripture just don't work in our current world."**  
**(*The New Hermeneutic*, Denny Boultinhous, p.29, Image, Vol.6, no.2)**

#### **Absorbing The Feminist Movement Of Our Culture**

**"We are struggling to define the role of women in our churches in view of contemporary culture just as the early church did in its culture"**  
**(*The Crisis Of Change*, ibid)**

**1 Corinthians 14:34** Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.

**1 Timothy 2:12-14** And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.