

## Three Terrible Termites that can Terminate a Church

**Intro:** I have been thinking about, and listening to other pastors who are struggling with trying to help their churches grow. I hear their frustration and I can feel their pain as they prepare sermons and try to encourage the flock, but their work appears to be fruitless as it becomes harder and harder to get Christians off dead center.

Now before you get too excited, I recognize that the actual growth of a congregation both numerically and spiritually is all up to the Lord but there should be a visible result if the Lord is bringing about growth.

*Acts 2:41-47 actually says Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church--about three thousand in all. They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer.*

*A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had.*

*They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.*

When was the last time the church today, especially in rural America, has seen anything close to that kind of results? If the God of today is the same as he was back then, I would suggest that there has been a let down somewhere along the way and it is not on God's part

One of the things I have been thinking about is, what happens when termites get into a person's home? I would like to think about three terrible termites, that if undetected and dealt with, can undermine and destroy the work and ministry of a church just like termites do to a home. These termites I am thinking about can kill the Acts 2 results in churches even in modern times

### I. The termites process of work and the physical results

First, termites work in the dark and unseen places. They are in the walls and the wooden parts of the house structure. Secondly, they are extremely active even when we don't see or hear them. Thirdly, moisture is important to the survival especially of

the subterranean termite and we will think a bit about that later on. Finally, people seldom suspect any problem until the damage is done. And the repair of the damage is much more costly than if there were vigilant observation and preventative treatment

I want to look at three specific termites that can do great damage to the church just as these termites can damage the house you live in. They are pride, indifference and laziness and I want to look at each on and see what the damage is that they can do.

## II. Pride, Pride eats away at the life and fabric of the church

The result of pride is church stagnation because Christians are often too proud to change. Actually there are many tears caused by not changing because of pride and if you remember, moisture is important to subterranean termites. Likewise, tears caused by prideful actions and their results in church fuel this termite which can indeed terminate the church.

Because of this termite of pride there are church splits, hard feelings, people leaving because of hurt feelings, they don't get the attention they feel they need which is really nothing more than a **backdoor type of pride** that says you didn't notice me, so I am mad

But for whatever reason whether front door pride or the back door type it usually means going no where because they don't want to get involved in another situation like they just left. So the result of this termite is not a good one and it has taken down many a Christian, as well as many a church

A second termite that can terminate the church is

## III. Laziness

There is never an end to the work that it takes for a church to operate and there is always a shortage of operators in any church. Part of that problem is laziness **Think about this**, the lazy Christian will not look for a ministry because he is afraid he might find one and he will have to do something. Lazy Christians will make up excuses so they don't have to get involved, so in the end we could say it like Pastor Joseph Rodgers as he wrote " Lazy people will be an irritant to the people around them. They're like a millstone to an organization such as the church although it does apply to other organizations as well. Have you ever noticed how lazy people affect the whole at a place say like work? They sap the organization of energy, frustrate the diligent, and take the focus off the mission. At church, lazy Christians just get in the way. They serve as road blocks that you constantly have to step over. Their complaining and

shenanigans always arise at the most inopportune times to prevent the whole from moving forward. Basically lazy people enjoy complicating progress."

You are not a lazy termite working or (rather resting in the dark) who would think about causing the church to terminate, are you? It is easy for all of us to be lazy. It's like the story by Jack Handley as an example, He said "There used to be this bully who would take my lunch money each day. I decided to fight back so I started taking Karate lessons at \$5 a lesson. Then I realized that it was cheaper to pay the bully than it was to take karate, so I quit karate and started paying the bully."

As bad as these first two termites are this next one is even more destructive. It is a termite called

#### IV. Indifference

Indifference is described as, the trait of lacking enthusiasm for or interest in things generally. It is not caring about or interested in someone or something. It is lack of interest, esp. when interest is called for. Its synonyms are basically apathy and unconcern

This one is a killer. Lets look at a church in the book of Revelation that suffered from this It was the church at Sardis. In Revelation 3:1, the church at Sardis was described as a "dead" church... This passage reveals that churches can die - and they often do...

There are at least two ways a church may die...

- ◆ It may cease to exist which does happen, but more generally,
- ◆ It may die inwardly, even while it still lives outwardly, and the killer involved in the second way is indifference

Warren Wiersbe writes of this church at Sardis "Reputation without life. Her best days were behind her. This is the "Has-Been" church, a great name in the past, but no ministry today. It is ready to die, but it can receive new life if it will but strengthen what it has."

Indifference is a subtle, yet effective weapon used by Satan. A person does not have to oppose the church to kill it, just be slothful, lazy, apathetic, idle, inactive and indifferent about its ministry and service to a community! - It will surely get the job done

Don't forget the warning of Matthew 12:30 which puts indifference in a nutshell no matter how you look at it. Listen to what it says *Anyone who isn't helping me opposes me, and anyone who isn't working with me is actually working against me.*

What are some SYMPTOMS OF INDIFFERENCE?

- ◆ Irregular attendance at services - I don't care if I go or not
- ◆ Lack of participation in the services - I just want to sit here and as soon as the preacher is done, beat it out the door
- ◆ Consistently arriving late to services - so what if I am late. They ought to be thankful I am even here
- ◆ Diminishing efforts to win souls to Christ
- ◆ No personal and private devotions (Bible study and prayers)

I think that we have been able to see that there are at least three terrible termites that can destroy a church and probably the most dangerous one is indifference. How can we help: With termites in the house we call the Orkin man don't we? Well what about in the church??

Lets call the Spiritual Orkin man, as it were, the Holy Spirit who can help us.

For the termite of pride remember: don't brag, it isn't the whistle that pulls the train

For the termite of laziness remember: a hen is the only thing that can lay around and still produce

For the termite of indifference remember: fervent service is the only antidote to indifference...**So first,**

We must not grow weary in doing good - Galatians 6:9 *So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time.*

We must be diligent, and not become sluggish - Hebrews 6:11-12 *Our great desire is that you will keep right on loving others as long as life lasts, in order to make certain that what you hope for will come true. Then you will not become spiritually dull and indifferent. Instead, you will follow the example of those who are going to inherit God's promises because of their faith and patience.*

We must hold fast the hope we confess by encouraging one another – Heb. 10:23-25 *We must hold tightly to the hope that we say is ours. After all, we can trust the one who made the agreement with us. We should keep on encouraging each other to be thoughtful and to do helpful things. Some people have gotten out of the habit of meeting for worship, but we must not do that. We should keep on encouraging each other, especially since you know that the day of the Lord's coming is getting closer.*

If we fail to encourage one another pretty soon all of us will be indifferent and not bothering to help each other. **But Remember:** God does not alter God's plans because of the indifference of human beings. He will find someone to reach our area if he finds that we won't make the changes necessary as the team from Lapeer.

Has the spiritual Orkin man, The Holy Spirit of God, been working on you to uncover and help you to terminate the spiritual termites that are undermining you and trying to terminate your church??

In closing I wonder if the termite of sin is eating away your home in heaven? If that is you be sure to read the next few lines and you will see that Jesus is waiting to make a house call to your heart.

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God.  
Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at [lapeerchurch@gmail.com](mailto:lapeerchurch@gmail.com) Subject line: (Salvation)