

Friendly Fire

Three forces at work that seek constantly to undermine our passion and zeal for Jesus: the *world*, the *flesh*, and the *devil*.

How to Kill a Church

1. Neglect your private walk with God
2. Neglect your public walk with God
3. Adopt a worldly mentality
4. Withhold your money
5. Remain detached and uninvolved
6. Be unfriendly, uncaring, insensitive
7. Lose your passion for souls
8. Be inconsistent in your witness
9. Be negative and openly critical
10. Openly challenge and oppose the authority of your leaders

1. Negativity reflects a Defeated Soul

"a man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps."

Proverbs 16:9

"above all else, guard your heart for it is the well spring of life."

Proverbs 4:23

"out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks."

"the good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him."

Matthew 12:33-35

2. Negativity seeks to justify itself

"all a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord".

Proverbs 16:2

3. Negativity will choose your friends for you

4. Negativity distorts the truth

5. Negativity makes sweeping judgements

Jesus said, "For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?"

6. Negativity can harm your health

7. Negativity will determine your future

*Sow a thought, reap an action. Sow an action, reap a habit.
Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny!*

How do we guard our hearts against negativity?

Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, **but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.** Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Romans 12:2 ESV

1. Ask God for His perspective.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. **In all your ways acknowledge him,** and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV

2. Memorize and meditate on scripture.

"I have **stored up your word in my heart,** that I might not sin against you."

Psalm 119:11 ESV

3. Spend time with positive people.

Do not be deceived: **"Bad company ruins good morals."**

1 Corinthians 15:33 ESV

4. Guard your mind.

Finally, brothers and sisters, **whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right,** whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Philippians 4:8

5. Cultivate a thankful heart.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

6. Provide visual reminders

My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; **bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.** So you will find favour and good success in the sight of God and man.

Proverbs 3:1-35 ESV

7. Let bygones be bygones

Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: **forgetting what lies behind** and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14 ESV