

## Not Enduring Sound Doctrine

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by Wayne Goff

Make no mistake about it brethren, American Christians have entered the period of time Paul warned Timothy about in 2 Timothy 4:3-4. It reads:

**“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”**

This is not a new phenomenon. Christians and churches in other countries in generations past have done the same thing. Israel of old repeatedly went into apostasy because they had no desire to hear the Truth and be changed by it. Sound preaching is not easy and comfortable. It is challenging and life-changing. The first Gospel sermon in Acts 2 accused its listeners of murdering the Messiah! The sermon Paul preached to the Athenians in Acts 17 accused them of worshiping ignorantly! Go through the book of Acts and consider the **message** of the first century preachers. Then compare that with the message of preachers today. Many today preach a watered-down, feel good, easy message of generalities so as not to offend anyone.

Why do I say that we have entered this period as American Christians now? My observation has been that many churches are finding creative ways to eliminate or minimize the preaching that **is** done. Some blatantly cancel Sunday evening services. Others combine the three services on Sunday morning and abbreviate what is done. Others substitute song worship *habitually* for the sermon. When you point out the **danger** in these practices, the reply is that we are meeting God’s requirements for attendance on Sunday already! Perhaps that is true, but we are also **minimizing** the preaching of God’s Word by what we do. We are only fooling ourselves! I will become even more unpopular by saying this, but as a preacher of the Gospel I am obligated to “*reprove, rebuke and exhort.*” Sound gospel preaching is not a popularity contest (Gal. 1:10). Preachers must go about sounding the alarm while there is still a sliver of hope!

Stay tuned in the next few years and watch these minimalist churches become *spiritually weaker* and *more carnal*. The change is slow and subtle, but it is sure and certain. The **lifeblood** of every local church is its teaching program. Weaken the pulpit and you weaken the church! Satan knows when we grow weary of hearing the truth preached and when he can swoop in and scoop up a handful and carry them away with the chant: “everyone is doing it!” Is there safety in numbers (Ex. 23:2)? I think not!

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