

Scott's Thoughts

April 28, 2024



“And now, behold, the king walks before you, and I am old and gray; and behold, my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my youth until this day.” (1 Samuel 12:2, ESV)

Far too many churches have folded over the years, and it seems to be happening with greater frequency in our area of the country. No one who has been part of any congregation for any length of time wants to see their congregation cease to exist. The problem is not that churches in the community would uninvite those wanting to attend their groups. The problem is that every church views God, Jesus, The Holy Spirit, and a complex list of other things differently and when someone becomes dissatisfied with something in the congregation, they want to change churches or quit going to church entirely.

One of the signs of a dying church is Silence! I Remember not so long ago when we had no children in our church building except on those rare occasions a visitor came with their children. With no children, the building was always quiet and peaceful. Silence is not always golden! “The Sound of Silence” was signaling our death as a church. So, we as a congregation, prayed for children because we knew that to survive as a congregation of people who love the Lord, we need to love and train children to carry on God’s work.

God, in his wisdom, sent us several families with children. Today we have children of a variety of ages who attend regularly, and it has changed our lives drastically. We now hear the shrill voices as they get excited or as they chase each other. We are awed when they give us a picture they drew in class and tell us a story. This brings

joy to our hearts as it is the sound of the future. We cannot grow by just convincing an adult here or there to assemble with us, we also need to be training children who will one day lead singing, teach Bible classes, clean the building or so a hundred other tasks it takes to keep a congregation going.

The Church was never meant to be just a gathering place for Sunday morning. It is to be an interconnected body that rallies to support all parts of the body including our youth. The Bible teaches that parents are to train up their children in the Lord but training them is not exclusively for parents. As an older couple, these children are important to my wife and to me. They are also important to all the older people in our congregation, and we are eager to help. Soon we will be meeting as a congregation to discuss how we can best carry out the education of our youth.

Children need classes that are quite different from adult level classes. Classes for the children help them to learn on their level. The material for these classes is expensive and adds a financial strain to the church budget, but their education is most important. Education includes teaching them about fellowship. When they spend time with each other, we need to share with them how to get along the way God would have us. They need opportunities to make Christian friends that will last a lifetime. They need Christian friends they can lean on as they grow older and slower. They need to learn the commitment of making God the focus and ruler of their lives. Therefore, it is especially important for every one of all ages of our congregation to meet together and discuss how to better train our youth.

“Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth.” (Psalm 127:4, ESV)

Thanks for listening and keep on shining.

—Scott