

The Prophet's Column

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God told Noah that He was going to destroy man from off the face of the earth in 120 years. Why 120 years? I don't know and the Bible doesn't tell us. But God is sovereign, which every sinner learns long before God saves him, and can and does as He pleases.

You learn under Holy Spirit Conviction (John 16:7-11) that you don't dictate to God. But this period of 120 years was a time of grace. What will man do with it? The Lord sent His warning through His servant Noah. Keep in mind John 8:47; "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because you are not of God." There is the line of

demarcation! You will either hear God's Word, or not hear His Word. To hear God's word means to obey it. Now, here is the generation of Noah's day; it is almost 2,000 years since God made Adam and placed him here in Eden. How can we rightly describe man at this point in the world's history? Genesis 6:11-12 says: "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

Now that is God's description of mankind at this point in the

world's history. That is also an accurate description of this wicked generation we live in today! This lets us know the Second Coming of the Lord is very near, much nearer than we think. God is a merciful God. He gave this wicked generation 120 years. The He gave them another period of grace; "For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth." Genesis 7:4. Wasn't that grace? Behold the goodness of God! But in the face of the goodness and mercy of God, Noah's gen-

eration went about their business; "eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage (wife-swapping), until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Read this account in Genesis 7:11-24. Millions of souls were destroyed in this watery judgment and were swept into Hell. This was Hell's first harvest. All those souls who refused God's warning from the lips of His servant, Noah, perished in the flood. What a judgment! Can you conceive of millions of souls beating on that ark crying to get in after the waters started? It's an awful thing to sin against God. Sin is a damning thing. God hates sin.

Churches rally to end fires

Religion can help keep kids safe

Continued from 11A

He ticked off issues such as real estate agents and banks "redlining" blacks out of white neighborhoods, new court rulings on minority voting rights, and different sentences for drug use that leaves many blacks facing stricter punishment.

"This will be a march just like the Million Man March, because people are that angry," he said.

Gray and Mackey said South Carolina leads the nation in burned churches with 32; state officials say they have counted 17 black church burnings since 1991.

More than 100 black churches nationwide, mainly in the South, have been burned since January 1995. Federal law enforcement officials also have investigated a number of suspicious fires that consumed other houses of worship and churches with majority white congregations during the same period.

Altogether, more than 250 fires have been investigated.

Law enforcement officials have concluded that only about 20 percent of the black church arsonists now solved appeared to be racially motivated.

SPECIAL TO THE POST

A new report from the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse says religion can keep kids from using illegal drugs and alcohol.

Two Brigham Young University professors say they have 20 years of research to back up such a claim.

"Something inherent in religious belief makes it effective in channeling youth away from cigarettes, alcohol and drugs," and other delinquent activity, says Bruce A. Chadwick, a sociologist and director of the university's Center for Studies of the Family in Provo, Utah, now assisted by Brent L. Top of the school's religion faculty. The two researchers have delved further

into the study of the religion-drug connection than perhaps any other American team.

And data compiled since the mid 1970s says there is a definite connection. But there's also a catch. Public religious behaviors alone, like simple church attendance, caution Chadwick and Top, do not correlate with lower delinquency rates. Says Chadwick, "Most of the research on what I call 'the hellfire and damnation hypothesis' - you go to church and have it pounded in, so automatically you don't do delinquent things - that just doesn't hold; it's been rejected by the research over and over. This is where kids go to church just because Mom and Dad say 'you're going or you can't have the car this week,' or 'we won't give you an allowance.' So these

kids go to church, they sit through the meetings, they do the motions but it is not a religious experience."

"These public activities," adds Top, "do not counteract the peer pressures facing youth today. Instead, it's the 'personal internalization of the religious experience' that steels a teenager against the wiles of the world.

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