

# Challenges for the 21st Century Church

The 21st Century Church will face challenges never dreamed possible. It is imperative that we look ahead to better prepare for the conflict. After combining prayer and research with years of pastoral experience, let me focus on the following 12 issues that loom as some of our greatest challenges in the next 15 years:

**1.** The church will face the "Graying of America," with an expected 70 million older persons (20% of the population) by 2030. This will necessitate the nearly impossible mandate upon the church to blend together the four generational groups often found in churches: BUILDERS (born prior to 1945), BOOMERS (1945-64), BUSTERS and GEN X (1965-1983), and BRIDGERS/MILLENNIALS (born since 1984). Discontent over worship styles and music will intensify. The church must address the needs of all people God places in its care. Remember, love the brotherhood regardless of age or gender. [2 Corinthians 12:20-21](#)

**2.** Spirit-filled (Pentecostal) churches will come under tremendous pressure from clergy and church members, to silence the Gifts of the Spirit in public meetings, and to further compromise Pentecostal teachings. The Full Gospel church must take a stand for freedom of the Spirit in all of its ministries. [1 Corinthians 14:37-39](#)

**3.** Churches will be pressured to adopt unscriptural tactics of the corporate business world into key areas of their structure. This may lead to stale, impersonalized, or ineffective religious procedures. The church must understand that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, and the Biblical order of organization is to be followed. [2 Timothy 3:5](#)

**4.** America will steadily decline as the major influence in the world. This will create stress within our business and economic community. Our only Hope is a mighty revival of God's glory, by again placing our total trust in God. The church must preach/teach the total Word of God and live it in the marketplace. [Hebrews 4:12](#)

**5.** The church will continue to lose respect in the community. Godly values and Spiritual concepts will be relegated to fables, myths, and legends. Skepticism will be voiced from major community leaders. Tax exemptions will be challenged and withheld whenever possible. City governments will not welcome churches or easily approve their purchase of land. The church must remember its mission and focus is on reaching out to everyone with the Gospel of Christ, and do all possible to elect Christian government officials. [1 Timothy 2:1](#), [2](#)

**6.** Individuals who desire selfish control over the church will undermine the office of Pastor. Wolves will creep into the local church and scheme to lead astray the faithful members of the congregation. They will seek to cause divisions over petty and insignificant issues. The church must warn the people, and operate in wisdom and harmony according to their Constitution and Bylaws, conventional wisdom, and Scripture. [Jeremiah 3:15](#)

**7.** The unbelieving world will direct outright hostility toward the church, with open persecution to follow. The hatred for the Gospel message will permeate the media, government, medical and

research organizations, the entertainment industry, and educational institutions. What has been whispered in the dark will be shouted in the streets. The church must prepare our congregations for harassment, but we must not withdraw from the community. We must double our efforts to win souls to Christ in the time we have left. [1 Corinthians 4:10-12](#)

**8.** The American family will continue to disintegrate. The core values of the home will be attacked in an unprecedented assault by the institutions of the world. The church must teach the Biblical principles of marriage, family, and child rearing. [Ephesians 5: 21-33](#)

**9.** America will continue to become multi-cultural, international, and racially/sexually diverse. No longer can the church ignore this reality. We must speak to the issues Biblically, and model Godly behavior in our homes, schools, congregations, and communities. Foreign and Home missions programs become even more important. [2 Corinthians 4:1-6](#)

**10.** The cities of America (large and small) will continue to fragment, and to serve as havens for crime, violence, perversion, and drugs. The church must aggressively reach out with evangelism, food, clothing, physical labor, counsel, and genuine love. [Luke 10:1-12](#)

**11.** The economic crisis in the world will worsen as the Bible predicted. Churches must model Godly stewardship of our treasury, buildings, ministries, and congregations. [Malachi 3:10-12](#)

**12.** Throughout America, the distortion of the truth will intensify. Lies will saturate every institution of our nation. "Who can you trust," will be a major question. The church must never be guilty of false witness. The truth must be told in every classroom, board meeting, worship service, and publication. [John 14:16-18](#)

Jesus taught, " When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." ([Luke 21:28](#)) Let us pray with purpose, and act in Faith. To God be the Glory!