

# **Breaking up Fallow Ground**

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I. The shortest way to a cemetery for a church is to assume that everything is alright.

A. An approach to correcting church problems: list the credits, debits, and give some advice.

II. The credit side.

A. Doctrine.

1. We may believe a thing, but not emphasize it.

2. It is like having money in the bank that is not drawing interest.

B. Unity.

C. Projects.

D. Enjoying the presence of God.

1. The test of a church.

E. Interest of a church in missions.

1. Money pledged.

2. People sent.

III. The debit side. (dangers of a larger church)

A. An ecclesiastical danger - a loss of the first love.

1. Younger churches employ the services of more church members because of the need.

2. Losing a love for the Lord is more tragic than lung cancer, because this affects the heart.

3. God can become less to us.

4. There needs to be a stirring, a humbling, a seeking of God, and a repenting.

B. Constricted sympathies.

1. It is necessary to protect and conserve our own fellowship.

2. But we seek this so that we might have a larger outlook to the reaches of the world.

3. There is nothing quite as dangerous as an old person who has become self-centered.

4. We ought to ask for God's sympathies towards others regardless whether we are aware of any good reason to love them.

C. A lack of prayer for the right things.

1. We ought to pray that we are blessed with physical health that reflects our spiritual health.

D. Too little concern for lost man.

E. A lack of fruitful generosity.

1. There is a danger of becoming the spiritual bourgeoisie.

2. Dress ought to matter little - the poorest of the poor ought to always be welcome into the church and be cared for.

F. Avoidance of sacrifice.

1. We too easily adopt an easy way of life.

2. The human mind is ingenious at devising ways of making the flesh at ease with religion.

G. Our tastes are too similar to the world's.

1. If we love the world, the Father is not in us.

H. A lack of desire.

1. Many have been convicted of need but have not grown in spite of this need.

IV. What one can do.

A. Break up the fallow ground.

1. There needs to be individual spiritual progress in the church.

2. Some say that people need more, but we need less to be spiritually rich.

3. Our hearts need to become tender.

4. The needs of the world must break us, so that the business of Christianity becomes everything and so that everything else becomes nothing.

5. Things are not at the heart of Christianity, but God is.

6. Breaking up fallow ground is a personal task.

**Applications questions.**

1. What are some of the common things in the “debit side” of this particular church?

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2. What are some of the “credits” of your church? What are some of the “debits”? What is the major issue at stake?

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3. How will you engender greater spiritual progress in your church? What things need to be gotten rid of?

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