

Divine Romance - Spiritual Warfare

Week 6 – Friday

Rom. 1:24-32

Recently we had a young people's conference in the north-eastern United States for the local churches for the states from Virginia to Maine. We had it in the campground in upstate New York that we bought. Out of the burden of being relevant and reaching them, we conducted an anonymous survey and asked a few questions. We asked, "What do you think are the biggest issues that young people are facing today in America?" We asked them to write three things. It was very interesting to see their perspective and also interesting to see the perspective of the older high schoolers in contrast to the younger high schoolers, and the perspective of the brothers in contrast to the sisters. I was very struck that both the boys and girls of the older high schoolers had almost the same answer. I was a little surprised by that. Second, we asked, "What are the biggest issues that kids in your school face?" That could be very different. What happens in the country is one thing but it could be very different if you are in a big city like New York or Philadelphia, or if you are in suburbs. But these answers with the high school young people were all the same. They told us that from their perspective the biggest issues are drugs and alcohol. The next issue is depression. Down the list and not as high as I expected was dealing with the issue of homosexuality. I thought that that was going to appear higher on the list. They said that these things were issues in America in general and also in their school.

Then we asked, "What is the one biggest issue that you are facing?" Of course, this was anonymous. Many of them, particularly the older high schoolers, talked about pressure, anxiety, thinking about their future, what school they were going to go to, choosing a major, choosing a career—all these kinds of things. There was a list of 25 different things that they mentioned, but these were by far the most popular ones for both the boys and the girls. So, we encouraged the serving saints, "Please pay attention to this. You may think, 'Our young people, thank the Lord, don't have issues with drugs, alcohol, or depression.' But if in their anxiety about facing the future we don't help them and come to counsel them, they will look to those things to answer the need." Even just the stress of staying awake all night to do some work or some last minute paper, might make some vulnerable to a temptation. After we did this little survey, in one meeting toward the end of the conference, I spoke a little word concerning their responses. At the end of that meeting the young people lined up, quite a number of them gave us their honest testimony of being 15 years old and being offered drugs on the school bus and how they dealt with that. They had to change the way they were with people. Oh, the temptations facing our young people!