The Christian’s Great Challenge

Phil. 2:14-16

Introduction:
A. Accepting Christ is a challenge — but not that great.
   1. The faith-producing evidence is clear (cf. Rom. 10:17; John 20:30-31; 2 Peter 1.16
   2. The plan of salvation is quite simple (Mark 16:15, 16; Rom. 10:10; Acts 2.37-38
   3. The basic incentive to be a Christian is enticing. (Rom. 5:9; Rev 2.10)
B. Living for Christ, of itself, is challenging — but not that great.
   1. The worship expected is quite simple and straightforward.
   2. The work, as individuals, as families and as congregations, is also quite straightforward.
C. The great challenge is doing it all “in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation:”
   1. Surrounded by social and political corruption.
   2. Surrounded by moral and religious perversion.
D. Three aspects that make this so challenging:

Discussion:
I. The Hostility of the Crooked and Perverse Generation.
   A. Faithful Christians can expect hostility (Matt. 10:34-36; Heb 12.3; 2 Tim 3.12)
   B. People are hostile for different reasons.
      1. Feel threatened by anyone different. (1 Pet. 4:4).
      3. Envy (Matt. 27:18; Acts 13.45)
   C. The challenge is to endure without retaliating or accepting deliverance (Heb. 11:35)
II. The Discouragement of the Crooked and Perverse Generation.
   A. As a lover of peace, discouraged by strife, war, and turmoil.
   B. As lover of righteousness, discouraged by corruption (2 Pet 2:7-9)
   C. As small minority, discouraged by how few want to do right. (1 Pet. 3:20).
   D. The challenge to continue knowing the end result.
III. The Subtle Influence of the Crooked and Perverse Generation.
   A. This is likely the greatest threat to our eternal well-being.
   B. It is hard to be in the world without being of the world. (Cf. Rom. 12:2)
   C. Attitude, views and conduct of people around us often adversely influence us:
      1. Our morals and ethics.
      2. Our general appearance
      3. Our concept of the church.
      4. Our spiritual responsibilities.
      5. Our priorities.
      6. Our family matters.
   D. The challenge is keep ourselves unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27)

Conclusion:
A. If we live at all it will be in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.
B. If we make it to heaven, we will have to do so in spite of the environment in which we live.
C. We cannot blame any personal failures on the times and places in which we must live.