Why Congregations Die
Rev. 3:1

Introduction:
A. Congregations can die (text) – the work of God destroyed (Rom. 14:20).
   1. Some still meet regularly but are dead and don’t know it.
      a. May be very active, but unscriptural.
      b. May be very inactive, except to meet.
   2. Some cease to meet – property sold or abandoned.
B. Congregations die from various causes, like all living organisms – note ways congregations can die.

Discussion
I. Depleted to Death
   A. Losses (due to death, moving, drop-outs) cannot exceed gains on and on. (Water reservoir, Money)
   B. Losses must be replaced. (cf. Acts 2:47)
      1. By general evangelism (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15; Acts 8:4).
      2. By passing faith on to our children and grandchildren (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15)

II. Starved to Death (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1-3)
   A. Replace strong Biblical preaching with social talks, philosophy, pop-psychology and “3 s’s”
   B. Replace spiritual diet and exercise with carnal growth programs and gimmicks.
   C. Reduce other opportunities and means to increase Bible knowledge (cf. Hos. 4:6)
      1. Good Bible classes with good teachers and materials.
      2. Good gospel meetings with emphasis on teaching.
      3. Either the church does not provide these or they are not attended.

III. Discouraged to Death.
   A. By seeing the Lord’s work at a stand still (cf. Hag. 2:1-4).
   B. By constant murmuring (1 Cor. 10:10; Num. 14:1-2, 35-37).
      1. Some forever “down in the mouth” – cold water on any positive moves.
      2. Some gripe about everything or nothing.
         a. See little good in anything, anybody or any situation in the church.
         b. Speak of “greener pastures” elsewhere, do little to make pastures green at home.

IV. Frozen to Death (cf. Matt. 24:12)
   A. Lack of warmth toward each other (Rom. 12:10)
   B. Lack of warmth to needs (especially spiritual) of others.
   C. Lack of warmth to own need of other brethren (“I have no need of you’)
   D. Lack of warmth, tenderhearted, forbearing and forgiving – just demand it of them.

V. Bitten to Death (Gal. 5:15).
   A. With harsh and unnecessary speech to and about each others – like snapping turtles.
   B. With crafty words designed to put another “on the spot. – “gotchee.”

VI. Polluted to Death (cf. 2 Pet. 2:20; Eph. 5:27).
   A. With false doctrine (Gal. 2:4)
   B. With worldliness, ungodliness and immorality (1 Cor. 5:5, 6)
   C. Both kinds must be nipped in the bud. (Gal. 2:5; 1 Cor. 5:7)

VII. Choked to Death (Luke 8:14).
   A. Too busy with job, school, clubs to attend to give attention to church and spiritual exercise.
   B. To busy with sports, games, T.V. etc. to think of spiritual matters.

Conclusion:
A. Don’t take health and prosperity of congregation for granted.
B. Don’t contribute to its decline and fall by the thing discussed.