

WELCOME



There's
No Place
I'd Rather Be!!

CONNECT



GETTING STARTED



I'm a guest, and I don't want to do any harm.

This foundational posture shapes everything that follows - approaching with respect and genuine care for the community I'm entering.





I love the church.

This isn't academic or theoretical. This comes from a place of genuine affection and deep care for the bride of Christ.



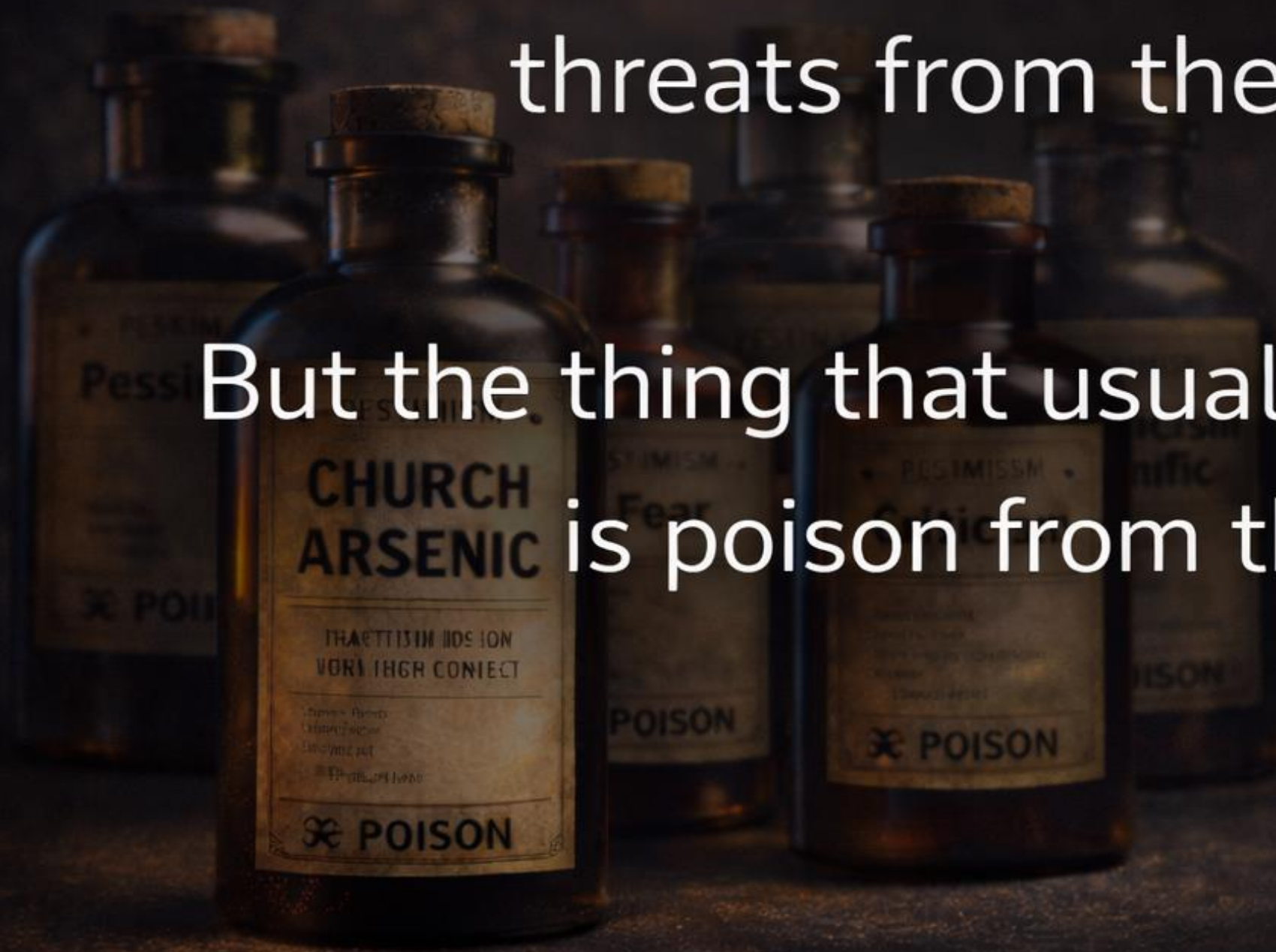
The Inside Invisible Killer *of Church Health*

Every church worries about
threats from the outside.



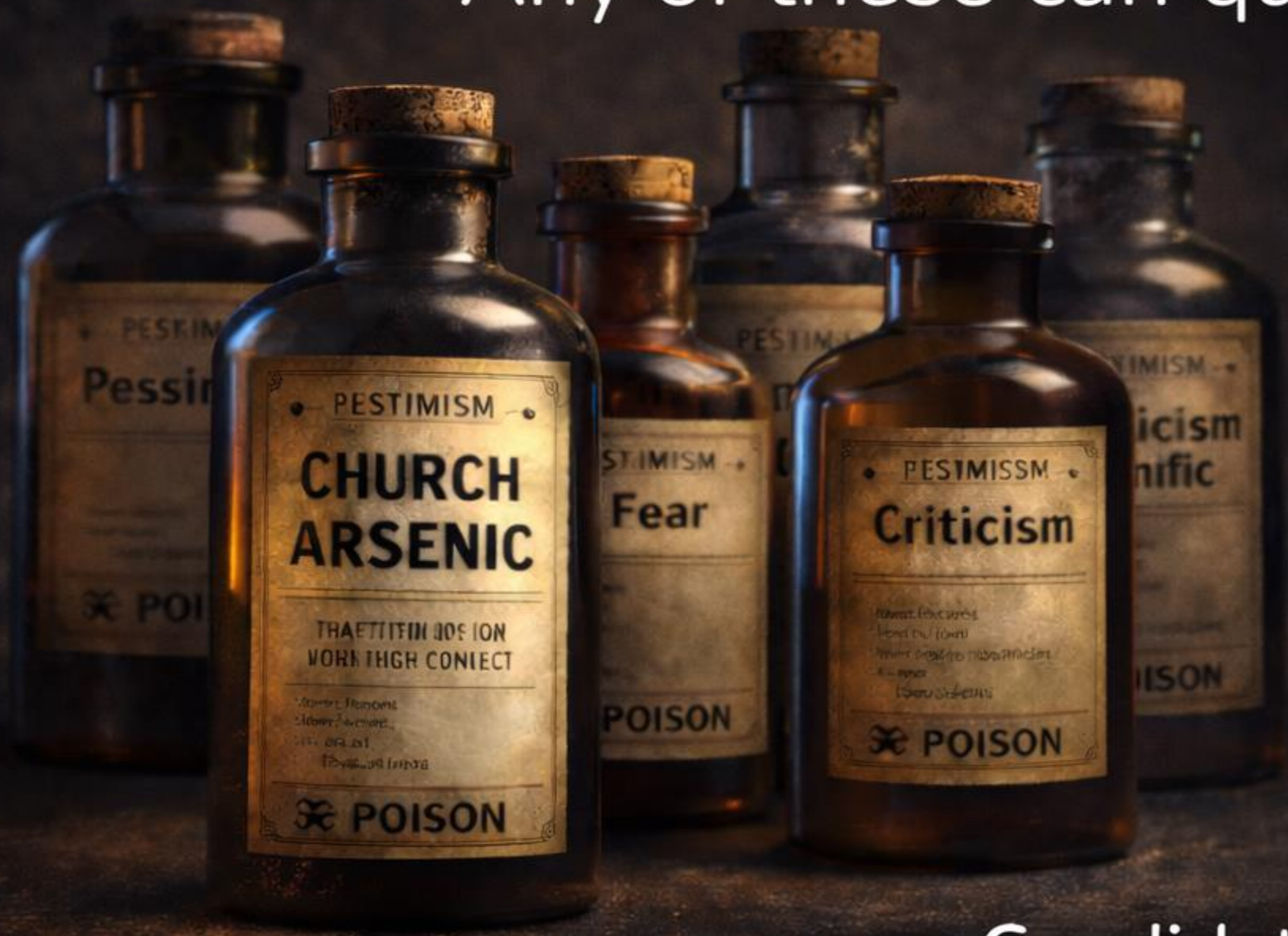
Every church worries about
threats from the outside.

But the thing that usually kills a church...
is poison from the inside.



Possible Poisons

Any of these can quietly kill a church.



Candidates:

Pride –

A man in a dark suit and tie is looking at his reflection in a large, dark-framed mirror. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on his face and suit, and deep shadows elsewhere. The background is dark and textured.

When egos rise,
unity dies.

Pride blocks both grace
and growth.

“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”
(James 4:6) – Corinth

Power Plays & Personal Agendas

Church isn't a battleground for control.

Power plays poison the mission.



“For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”

- James 3:16

Corinth

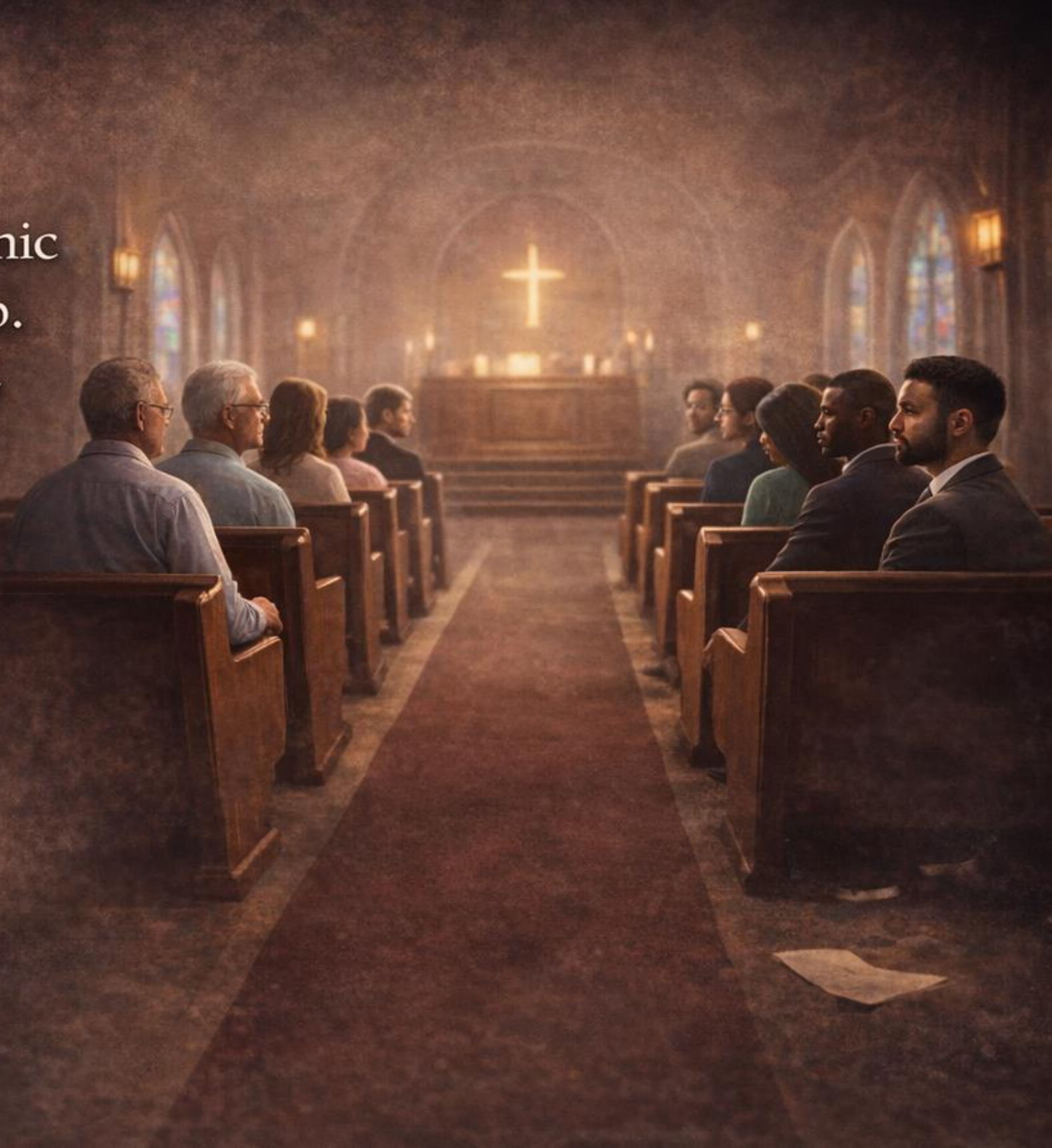
Prejudice

Racial, generational, or socioeconomic bias that hinders love and fellowship.

When this exists in a church, we know we are not living up to what God requires and when we know that and don't change we are hypocrites.

*“There is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free,
there is no male and female,
for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

(Galatians 3:28) – Galatia



Passivity –

A “let someone else do it” spirit that breeds burnout and **apathy**.

*“Whatever you do, work heartily,
as for the Lord and not for men.”*

(Colossians 3:23) – Colossae



People-Pleasing

- Looking for approval instead of truth in decisions and actions.
- When approval is sought over the gospel, we have set up an **idol**.

“For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God?

Or am I trying to please man?...

I would not be a servant of Christ.”

(Galatians 1:10) – Colossae

You need to preach on this.

?

The service is too long.

I don't like that...



POOR COMMUNICATION

Misunderstandings
that become
wedges of division.

*“Let no corrupting talk come out
of your mouths, but only
such as of good of building up.”*

(Ephesians 4:29)



PETTY COMPLAINTS & GRUMBLING

Petty grievances and negative talk which distracts and drains joy.

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing.”

(Philippians 2:14) – Philippi



PARALYSIS BY FEAR

Afraid to change, move, grow, risk,
speak up, or step out in faith.

*“For God gave us a spirit not of fear
but of power and love and self-control.”*

(2 Timothy 1:7)

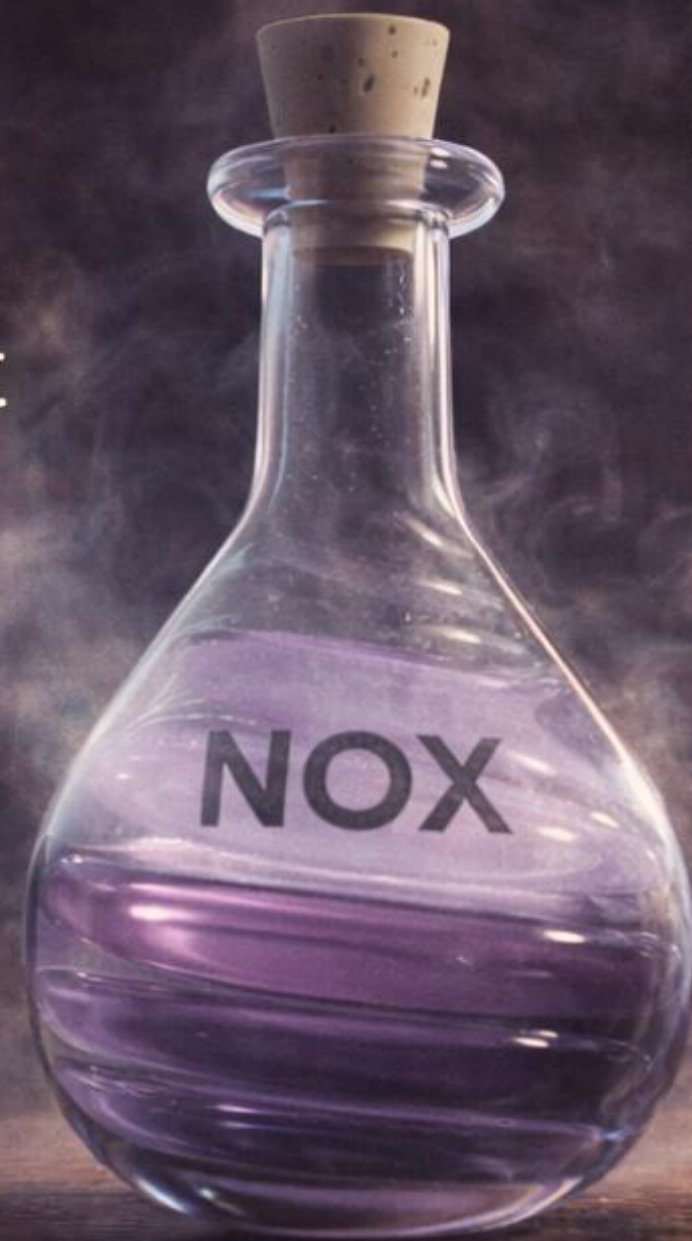


TRANSITION STATEMENT

BUT there is **ONE** ingredient
that will assure the not too distant
future death of a church —

I call it

Church Arsenic...



CHURCH ARSENIC #1

People today just don't care

The church is dying”

“We tried that before.”

“That won't work here.”

PESSIMISM

“The end is always near.”



The **Problem** of Pessimism

Philippians 2:14

“Do everything without grumbling.”

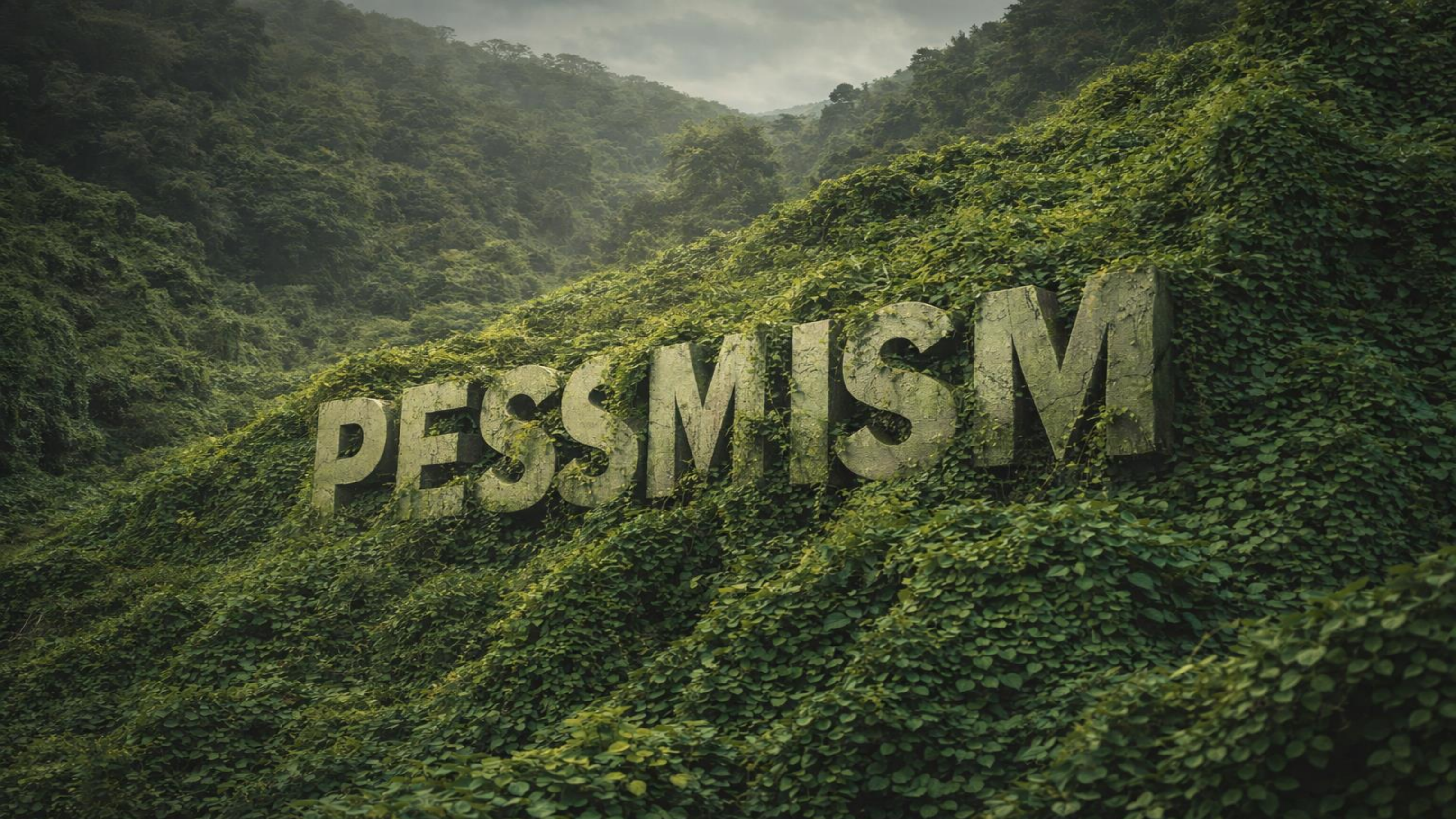
Point:

Grumbling and negativity quietly undermine unity.

And like Kudzu it spreads rapidly.

PESSIMISM

P E S S I M I S M



A photograph of a man and a woman in a church pew. The woman is on the left, leaning towards the man on the right, and is whispering into his ear. They both have serious expressions. In the background, other people are visible, also appearing to be part of a church service.

The **Power** of Pessimism

1. It is my strong belief that by far most of those who are killing the church by sharing this tainted koolaid do not intend to, or at least DID not intend to at first. The story of Jim: Jim and his wife had been there forever.

Pathway of Pessimism

A background image showing two men in a dimly lit setting, possibly a church or a study. The man on the left is looking towards the man on the right, who is partially visible in profile. The lighting is warm and focused on the subjects.

(Two church friends let's call them Ron and Bill, it started innocently)

| Galatians 6:9 "Let us not become weary in doing good..."

Point: Pessimism often creeps in gradually when people get discouraged.

Power of Positivity

A photograph of a church at sunset. The church has a white steeple with a cross on top. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow over the scene. In the foreground, the silhouettes of a congregation are visible, sitting in pews and looking towards the church.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Rejoice always... give thanks in all circumstances."

Point. Joy and gratitude are antidotes to pessimism.

Practice of Building Up

Ephesians 4:29

"Let no unwholesome talk come out of your mouths..."

Point. Encourage with words that build up, not tear down.

& the ultimate anti-pessimism verse

"May the God of hope fill you
with all joy and peace..."

-Romans 15:13

Point: Focusing on God's hope
dispels negativity.



The Pathway back to Positivity

Hebrews 10:24-25; 2 Timothy 1:7; John 16:33 "Let us consider how we may spur one another on..."

Point: Foster fellowship and encouragement to root out pessimism.

Remember, repent, do the first works.

Repentance means: WHO WANTS to just be a part of a church - giving average money in an average way to do average things? WHO wants to be a part of a place that is always fighting and ready to argue at any matter? BE MORE. YOU be more

