

An Inspired Warning to Change Agents

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Solomon long ago had some words of wisdom for all of those who think change for the sake of change is as necessary as breathing: “My son, fear thou Jehovah and the king; And company not with them that are given to change” (Pro. 24:21). Significantly, those who so eagerly urge change in our teaching and practice thereby demonstrate their lack of fear of Jehovah God. In fact, they consider the concept of fear of God to be heresy. Those who have a Scriptural fear for the Almighty would not dare to presume to either augment or diminish the Gospel by one iota.

There is also a warning in Solomon’s words for those who do fear God: “Company not with them that are given to change.” There is already a wide breach between brethren, but it is destined to grow wider and finally become an unbridgeable chasm, even as it did a century ago. On the one hand there are those of us who, like Paul, are determined to shrink not from “declaring the whole counsel of God” and who are “set for the defence of the gospel” (Acts 20:27; Phi. 1:16). On the other hand there are many who have ceased to “give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard [the Gospel]” and they have already “drifted away from them” (Heb. 2:1). These are those who can no longer be content with the purity and simplicity of the primitive Gospel. While we remain firmly rooted in the apostles’ doctrine, they have cut themselves loose from its restrictions. They are still in the drifting and changing process. The full extent of their eventual apostasy is any man’s guess, but many of them have adopted seed principles sufficiently corrupt to take them to full-blown denominational status. It is not a question of **whether** we must cease to have any company with them, but only one of **when**. Some are already so far gone that fellowshipping them would be little different from fellowshipping the Disciples of Christ denomination. Many others are well on their way down the same broad and wicked path. The cause of it all is their willingness to change the unchangeable Gospel.

The Gospel is the incorruptible seed, “the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever” (1 Pet. 1:23, KJV). Men may alter it, add to it, remove what they find offensive or unnecessary, mutilate it, explain it away, make merchandise of it, or abuse it in a thousand other ways. However, when they get through with their evil work, it will still be stubbornly, doggedly standing there as God’s perfect will for man on earth and His perfect standard for man at the Judgment. After all, men do not really change the Gospel—it stands as God gave it. When men begin to

tamper and toy with the Gospel, it becomes merely another false religious message that will damn the souls of both those who preach it and those who follow it.

“Yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar” (Rom. 3:4). “If we shall deny him, he also will deny us: if we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. 2:12–13). “He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).

[Note: This is an excerpt from a MS I wrote for and which I presented a digest of orally at the Bellview Lectures, hosted by the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL, June 11–15, 1994. It was published in the book of the lectures, *Changes in the Church of Christ*, ed. Michael Hatcher (Pensacola, FL: Bellview Church of Christ).]

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