

"Come Forth, My People" – No. 7

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We encourage the reader to read the previous articles on this topic, in which we postulated that thousands of good, earnest Christians who want to be faithful to Christ now find themselves in congregations that have either apostatized or that are so far along on the road toward liberalism that certain apostasy will soon be their fate. The question of what these faithful brethren are to do was answered by citing one passage. We believe it is legitimate to apply the urgent call of Revelation 18:4 to their situation: **"Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."**

Despite the numerous compelling reasons why Truth-loving brethren should have nothing to do with an apostate religious body (even if it falsely still sports a *Church of Christ* sign on its property), a large number of them continue to do so. They offer various excuses for their behavior.

"We know there are problems, and we don't agree with what is going on, but we hope we can correct these things by staying." Admittedly, some that have begun drifting have not reached the "point of no return," and it may be possible for some of them to be turned back to a staunch stand for the Truth. Where there is still a ray of hope, faithful brethren indeed need to stay and "contend earnestly for the faith" till there is obviously no hope remaining (Jude 3).

However, where it is apparent that the leadership of a congregation has fallen under the spell of liberalism or its advocates, there is little that can be done to alter its course. Those who dare object even to the most blatant errors in doctrine or practice are soon labeled "troublemakers" and ridiculed as "legalists, "tradition-bound mossbacks," or worse. Lamentably, we opine that the majority of the large congregations, whether in the cities or hamlets, have reached this point, with more than a few smaller churches aping them. Their elders and preacher(s) have set their courses leftward and they will not be turned from them. They have money, power, and worldly ambition that steamrolls anyone who gets in their way. Their twofold aim is numerical growth and favorable community image at whatever cost. As the consuming flame draws the moth, so the "broad way" that ends in destruction stretches out invitingly before them (Mat. 7:13), and they are pleased to cavort in it.

One is terribly naive or self-deceived to believe that he can have any detectable influence on the course of such a congregation. To stay with them is to contribute to tearing down that

which the Lord wants us to build. In doing so one only wastes effort, time, influence, and money on a lost cause – and will lose his soul in the bargain. The Lord's command concerning hardened apostate religious leaders is clear: " Let them alone: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (15:14).

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, June 7, 1990 of which I was editor.]

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