

"Come Forth, My People" – No. 8

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Good people who are in bad churches need to hear the Lord's warning in Revelation 18:4: "**Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.**" Faithful brethren who continue in liberal, apostate churches offer various excuses for doing so. For example:

"Although I don't approve of what is taking place, my family and best friends are there." The Lord knew the strength of family ties and He intended them to ordinarily be among the strongest we have. However, He also clearly warned that those ties must be counted secondary when loyalty to Him and His Word are involved (Mat. 10:34–36). We have for years appealed (and correctly so) to those in the denominations to come out of those unauthorized and sinful institutions, even though it meant separating themselves from the influence and religious fellowship of (and sometimes all association with) family members and friends. It is equally appropriate to thus appeal to those who are tied by friendships and family relations to digressive churches of Christ. We dare not be more loyal to family or friends or any other person or thing than to Christ (Mat. 6:33; Luke 9:23; 14:26–27).

Another may rationalize: "I have been a member of this congregation for years and I have invested too much money and time to walk away from it, even though I don't like what is going on." While admitting that it is not easy to accept the loss of money and time invested in a congregation that goes astray, it sometimes becomes necessary. The spiritual issues far outweigh the issue of mere money or time lost in such cases. To indicate that one is swayed by money or time may be a "dead giveaway" that one's heart is more set on earthly rather than on Heavenly and spiritual treasures (Mat. 6:21; Col. 3:1–2). The thinking of such a person is much like that of one whose house is in the path of a raging flood and he says to his would-be rescuers, "I have too much time and money invested in this place to leave it." What one does not realize in both cases is that he is going to lose what he has invested **whether he goes or stays**. One who is a member of a liberal congregation has already lost his "investments" to the cause of Truth. By remaining, he only compounds his losses by continued contributions of time and money. He had better be concerned with the loss of far more important things than money and time, however. He will lose his "investments" **and his soul** if he continues in such a church, thereby supporting sin and error (2 John 9–11), just as the man in the flood will lose his property **and his life** if he does not flee.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, June 14, 1990, of which I was editor.]

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