

Preaching to the Brethren

Dub McClish

I am noticing more and more that the very errors I was exposing in denominational doctrine and practice in the 1960s and 1970s I am now having to expose in our brethren who have adopted them. The following are just a few examples:

- 1. The purpose of baptism.** For years faithful men have taught that one cannot be taught incorrectly on baptism and baptized correctly, even if he is immersed. We have pointed out the error of those who deny or ignore the Scriptural purpose of baptism to bring the sinner into contact with the saving blood of Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16, et al.). Now some of our brethren are insisting that the sinner need not understand this purpose as long as he is baptized to "obey God." It is no more right for some of our brethren to teach error on this subject than for denominationalists to do so.
- 2. Grace/law relationship.** We have long fought the false doctrine that grace and law are incompatible. Sectarians insist that since we are under grace we are not under law. Now some of our brethren have imbibed this damnable heresy, and we must forcefully remind them that where there is no law there is no sin (Rom. 4:15) and where there is no sin there is no need for grace.
- 3. Holy Spirit baptism.** One of the pronounced errors of denominationalism (especially in the Pentecostal sects) has been the advocating of universal and continuing baptism in the Holy Spirit. This false doctrine is based upon a failure to respect the purpose and duration of this manifestation of the Spirit as taught in God's Word. Now some of our brethren are teaching that everyone must be baptized in the Holy Spirit, so we must reprove and correct our brethren on this subject.
- 4. Moral questions:** Dancing, drinking, wearing immodest apparel in public, allowing divorce and remarriage for various causes, and such like have long been winked at or even encouraged by various denominational groups. The principles upon which such things were exposed as sinful fifty years ago have not changed, but some of our brethren have changed and are treating such works of the flesh as harmless (Gal. 5:19-21). Worldliness has made a major invasion into the church, and we must cry out against it.

We could discuss other things as well that many congregations have copied from denominational dogma and example (e.g., the work of the church, funding the church's work, the concepts of unity and fellowship, et al.), but space fails us. Let us remember that false doctrine and practice are just as damnable for us as for those outside the body of Christ. We must exalt Truth and expose error wherever it is found (Rom. 12:9; Eph. 5:11; 2 Tim. 4:1-4).

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, December 17, 1987, of which I was editor.]

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