

A New Vocabulary, A New Attitude, And No More Old Sermons

For a while, in the midst of this general apostasy, and I stand by calling it that, some of our preacher brethren seemed to be brushing off the old sermons I heard fifty years ago as a child, and appeared to be willing to warn their brethren that, “We are drifting” (Heb. 2:1). Be it a desire to fit in while finding themselves in a diminishing circle of like-minded brethren, the evil influence of public education humanism (that most are willing to admit but refuse to do anything about) , or coming to the conclusion that “those old preachers “really were just narrow-minded sticks in the mud and decayed old dinosaurs from a long forgotten past , their tiny spurt of energy depicting a full steam ahead attitude, soon vanished like the vapor from a tea kettle once removed from the flame.

This one thing I believe I know: were men like Andrew Connally, William S. Cline, and Bill Jackson still around, they would not be pining to be on lectureship programs with allegedly sound brethren who post nonsense on their websites like, “about **our** church.” Neither would they accept those who have done an about face to embrace the “children’s Bible Hour;” which either is a slick disguise and sobriquet for the children’s church, or an attempt to deceive the liberals and progressives around that, “Hey, we are part of the mainstream, too.”

There is something else I thought I knew, but I am beginning to wonder about it now. I thought the men who taught me at the school of preaching some thirteen years ago would not have knowingly appeared with brethren who have run afoul through the things in the above paragraph, but they do now. Looking back on it, a little while ago a reality hit me, as they say, like a ton of bricks. They sometimes had their heads buried in the sand back then; now they have become funny looking birds acting like ostriches but wearing chicken feathers.

What has happened to the commitment to call things by Bible names and do things in Bible ways? While we are running through the quiver of questions, what happened to the lectureships of the recent past that dealt with real issues among the brethren, but have now given away to innocuous gatherings of political cronies talking about topics by which no liberal would be offended? Don’t get me wrong, I am not suggesting we ought to be negative all the time, but neither can we afford to reach the point of denying reality! And what is the explanation, pray tell, for the commandment to discipline ourselves, the one we once referred to as the forgotten commandment, all of a sudden evolving into the rejected commandment.

Some of my brethren no longer say much about, “Withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh disorderly” (2 Thess. 3:6). Apparently gone from their arsenal of verses is: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness” (Eph. 5:11). And 2 John 9-11 have been watered down to mean, don’t have any fellowship with a person who brings something other than the doctrine of Christ, unless of course he happens to be a good old war buddy that in those long forgotten days of militancy stood together with you against an error disseminating old university professor.

Jesus said He would build His church (Matt. 16:18). But it has now become “our church.” Excuse a bit of horn tooting, but I knew all along that phrase, “our church family” was a slippery slope, and I for one have never once used it in conversation or writing! Only those who have reached the age of accountability and who have obeyed the gospel of Christ can be members of the church, but now the precious little preschoolers have “their church” too. The worship assembly, brethren, is no more the church than is the building!

Years ago, anti brethren raised the false charge that we had embraced the concept of using human institutions to do the work of the church. Now, some of the same brethren who saw that charge was bogus are completely blind to the advent of what really are genuine human institutions, and despite their unwillingness to be swayed too far to the right, have been duped by those on the fringed left. Not only that, but it makes no difference to them that a “work” is headed up by liberals, run by liberals and profited from by liberals, their pragmatic thinking and the utility of the thing is more than they can resist, so they use it, if not outright support it. One brother wrote a book against one such organization, but to borrow a phrase from the Lord, “Not many days hence,” appeared on a lectureship with those, including his own Father, who appeared on lectureships with those who are head over heels in love with the same program. Do as I say, not as I do! We know what Jesus had to say about that in Matthew 23.

Some of us did not have to change our vocabulary, reassess our attitudes, or brush off the old sermons. We learned their truths many years ago, we’ve kept them in both our hearts and our repertoires’ and are not about to abandon them now. It is still the Lord’s church. And it is still His requirement that we withdraw ourselves from disorderly marchers, not sell them the pulpit in a meeting or lectureship for a sack of gold in the form of a renowned brother’s library

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