"REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK"

Prov. 22:28

A Series of Lessons by Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. The "landmark" was the OBJECT USED TO MARK THE BOUNDARY OF A FIELD.
2. Landmarks were frequently such moveable objects as a STONE or a POST.
3. The unscrupulous individual could take advantage of his neighbor by shifting the location of such boundary marks, thus robbing him of his land.
4. God did not allow the moving of these LANDMARKS -- Deut. 19:14; 27:17
5. God has set SPIRITUAL LANDMARKS among SPIRITUAL ISRAEL -- Gal. 6: 16 -- and has forbidden that they be removed. If we remove them we come under the CURSE OF GOD -- Gal. 1: 6 - 9; Rev. 22: 18 - 19; II John 9 - 11
   (1) Princes in Judah -- Hosea 5:10
6. Today in the church, many LANDMARKS are being REMOVED to the destruction of God's people.
7. They are being removed by UNSCRUPULOUS INDIVIDUALS by NEGLECT, by IGNORANCE, by FAILING TO HAVE CONVICTIONS and to stand up for them, and by INDIFFERENCE TOWARD FALSE DOCTRINE.
8. Let us look at some of these "ANCIENT LANDMARKS" that are being removed in SPIRITUAL ISRAEL.

I. THE LANDMARK OF SOUND GOSPEL PREACHING IS BEING REMOVED

1. The only POWER to SAVE souls from hell is the gospel of Christ -- Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:15 - 16; Eph. 1: 13; I Cor. 15: 1 - 4; I Cor. 11: 18, 21
2. The only way to PROPAGATE the KINGDOM in the earth is through sound gospel preaching -- Matt. 24: 14; I Thess. 1:8; Acts 28: 31; 8:12
3. Error and sin MUST BE REPROVED AND REBUKED -- I Tim. 1: 3; II Tim. 4:2; Eph. 5:11
   (1) The devil is busy sowing his tares -- Matt. 13: 24 - 25
4. When we preach ONLY a POSITIVE MESSAGE from our pulpits, and stop reproving error and sin, we have stopped preaching "ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD" -- Acts 20:27
   (1) We are not "pure from the blood of all men" -- Acts 20:26
   (2) We have REMOVED the Ancient Landmark of gospel preaching and are robbing our NEIGHBORS and BRETHREN of the TRUTH GOD WANTS THEM TO HAVE TO SAVE THEIR SOULS-- John 8:32; Jer. 23:30
   1. The princes in Judah -- Hosea 5:10
5. Many brethren today are like Israel of Old; they will "not hear the Law of the Lord"; they say to the preachers, "Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits" -- Isa. 30: 9 - 10
6. Jeremiah said this of God's people in his day: "A wonderful (or astonishment) and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the thereof?" --Jer. 5: 30 - 31

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7. Gospel Preaching is being DOWNPLAYED in favor of NEWER MEANS:

   (1) Drama, comedy, pop psychology, entertainment, and whatever PULLS THE MOST PEOPLE -- Gal. 1:10

   (2) Many preachers among us today cannot stomach sound doctrine.

      1. They will not refute doctrinal error -- I Tim. 1:3; Jude 3; Phil. 1:17

      2. They will not "stand in the GAP" BEFORE the Lord and do battle to protect His people from Sin -- Ezek. 22:30; 22:26-29

      3. They will not confront sin in the lives of members -- II Tim. 4:2; Eph. 5:11

         a. unfaithful members

         b. unsound members

         c. worldly members

   4. They are ashamed of the gospel -- Rom. 1:16; II Tim. 1:8

   5. They preach a message that allows people to be comfortable in their MATERIALISM, WORLDLINESS, DENOMINATIONALISM, and SELF-LOVE.

   8. The end of removing sound gospel preaching from our pulpits is bringing a falling away from the faith, and carrying God's people into denominationalism.

II. THE LANDMARK OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS BEING REMOVED

1. Church discipline is a command of God -- II Thess. 3:6

   (1) When we disobey the commands of God we sin -- I John 3:4

   (2) Listen to what God told Saul by His prophet Samuel when Saul disobeyed -- I Sam. 15:22-23

   (3) Notice what God says to the disobedient today -- Rom. 2:8; II Thess. 1:7-10

2. God wants His church kept pure -- Eph. 5:27; I Cor. 5:7

3. God wants the IMPURE PURGED OUT -- I Cor. 5:7

4. A local church cannot "KEEP THE FEAST" (live holily) and allow corruption in the lives of ungodly and unrighteous members to go undisciplined -- I Cor. 5:8

5. Paul told Corinth to take the FORNICATOR "away from among you" -- I Cor. 5:2

   (1) To "deliver such an one unto Satan" -- I Cor. 5:5

   (2) To "purge out" such an one -- I Cor. 5:7

   (3) "Not to company with fornicators" -- I Cor. 5:9

   (4) "with such an one no not to eat" -- I Cor. 5:11

   (5) To "judge them" -- I Cor. 5:12; John 7:24; Gal. 5:19, 21

   (6) To "put away from among yourselves" such a person -- I Cor. 5:13

6. The church must practice discipline to save the sinner -- I Cor. 5:5

   (1) To fellowship him in his rebellion is to encourage him in his way of living.

   (2) To withdraw may put him or her to SHAME -- II Thess. 3:14
(3) It may create in his or her heart a deeper respect for the good things of God.

(4) Note the brother at Corinth -- II Cor. 2: 2 - 9

7. The church must practice discipline to keep the church pure -- I Cor. 5: 7 - 8; Eph. 5:27; II Cor. 11: 1,2
   (1) Sin and evil tolerated is a leaven, working mischief in the body of Christ -- I Cor. 5:6
   (2) Discipline inspires godly fear and reverence in the hearts of those who hear and see it administered -- I Tim. 5:20; Acts 5:11
   (3) Discipline is the means by which the church proves her right to continue in God's favor -- Rev. 2:5

8. The church must practice discipline to have respect from the World -- Acts 5:11

9. God has never prospered His people while SIN was allowed to remain in their MIDST--(Achan had taken the
   accursed thing when they took Jericho).
   (1) God never prospered Israel while sin was in the camp when they fought against Ai -- Josh. 7: 11 -13
   (2) Achan had taken the accursed thing -- Josh. 7: 19 - 21; Josh. 6: 18 - 19
   (3) God had Israel to stone Achan and his family for this sin -- Josh. 7: 25
   (4) When Israel carried out the discipline, God gave them the city of Ai -- Josh. 8:1

10. To remove the LANDMARK OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE will cause the Lord to NOT bless a congregation, and it
   will cause them to remove the candlestick -- Rev. 5:5

III. THE LANDMARK OF THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH IS BEING REMOVED.

1. 1,200 Liberal churches and their preachers were interviewed from men connected with Abilene Christian
    University and 16.9% said "It would be acceptable to God for a woman to teach in adult Bible classes when
    BOTH MEN AND WOMEN are present."

2. 21.2% thought she should have a role in the PUBLIC WORSHIP ASSEMBLIES of the church.

3. 6.7% thought it would be acceptable to God for a woman to preach in a public worship assembly.

4. Many brethren in conservative churches of Christ think women ought to be in business meetings of the
   church.

5. Paul said, "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man" --2 Tim. 2:12 (ASV)

6. Paul gives the reason why she cannot teach over man or have dominion over man -- I Tim. 2: 13 - 14

7. Paul said women are not to address the assembly of men and women -- I Cor. 14: 34 - 35

8. Paul said the man (the male) is the spiritual head of woman; she is to respect that position -- I Cor. 11:3; I
   Cor. 14:34; I Tim. 2: 11 - 12; Gen. 3:16

9. God has given man and women DISTINCTIVE ROLES FROM THE BEGINNING:
   (1) Man is the head of woman -- I Cor. 11: 3; Gen. 3:16; Eph. 5: 22 - 24
   (2) The woman is in subjection to the man -- Eph. 5:24; Col. 3:18; I Cor. 11: 8 - 9
   (3) The woman was given to HELP MAN, not to rule over man -- Gen. 2: 18; I Cor. 11: 8 -9
   (4) Woman's role of subjection to man does not make her inferior to man or SECOND-CLASS.
      1. Man and woman are of the same NATURE
2. Equal in intelligence.
3. Equal morally.
4. Man and woman are EQUAL IN CHRIST -- Gal. 3: 28
   (a) This passage is dealing with salvation.
   (b) Woman has a subjective role that God gave her from her creation, and that is not changed by her salvation in Christ.
5. Paul's bases man's HEADSHIP over woman in the creation and the fall of man:
   (a) Woman is OF man -- I Cor. 11: 8; I Tim. 1:13; Gen. 2: 21 - 22
      i. Man, being first formed, first establishes his headship over the woman -- I Tim. 2:13
   (b) Woman is FOR man -- I Cor. 11:9
      i. She was made for the SAKE of man -- Gen. 2:18
      ii. She completes man
   (c) Woman was deceived in the transgression -- I Tim. 2:14; Gen. 3:16
9. The New Testament is a PATTERN for the church in this dispensation of time, the Gospel Age.
   (1) There is no proof in the New Testament that God ever gave woman a place of authority or leadership in the church.
   (2) None of the apostles were women.
   (3) None of the evangelists in apostolic days were women.
   (4) No women were ever appointed elders or deacons (none could qualify) -- I Tim. 3; Titus 1
10. For women to take a public role in the church is to remove a spiritual LANDMARK SET BY GOD.
11. To remove this LANDMARK will bring the vengeance of God on those that do it -- Hos. 5:10; Gal. 1: 6 - 9

IV. THE LANDMARK OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING IS BEING REMOVED
1. 41.6% thought "SPECIAL MUSIC BY SMALL GROUPS" had a place in the worship assembly.
2. 44.4% did not believe IMMERSED BELIEVERS who use musical instruments in worship would be lost.
3. Some of the liberal churches of Christ believe there should be an ATTITUDE OF INDIFFERENCE TOWARD THE USE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP -- IF A CONGREGATION WANTS TO USE IT, WELL AND GOOD, if one doesn't, well and good, but there ought to be fellowship with those who use it.
4. The New Testament only AUTHORIZES congregational singing in worship -- Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
5. Why solos, quartets, and choirs in the assembly of the saints are wrong used as acts of worship:
   (1) There is NO COMMAND, EXAMPLE or NECESSARY INFERENCE for a SPECIAL GROUP to be chosen from the congregation to do the singing.
      1. The command to sing is given to every member of the church -- Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19
   (2) The purpose of choir and solo singing is out of harmony with the purpose of congregational singing that is authorized in the New Testament.
      1. Choir and solo singing is for ENTERTAINMENT and EXHIBITING ABILITIES.
2. Congregational singing is to teach and admonish one another and to praise God -- Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19; Acts 16:25

(3) Christ never commanded it -- Matt. 28:18; 17:5; Heb. 1: 1 - 2; Col. 3:17

(4) They are not of the TRUTH -- John 16:13

6. In time, instrumental music is coming into the worship of many institutional churches of Christ.

7. Many people and preachers in institutional churches have no convictions against it.

8. Instrumental music is an addition to the Revelation of Christ -- Gal. 1: 11 - 12; I Cor. 4:6; II John 9 - 11; II Tim. 3:16 - 17

(1) It is NOT mentioned in the LAW of Christ -- Gal. 6:2

(2) There is NO command, necessary inference, or example for its use.

(3) Its use RESTS purely on HUMAN LEGISLATION -- it goes beyond that which is written -- I Cor. 4:6; II John 9 - 11; Matt. 15:9

9. Instrumental music is forbidden by God's law of EXCLUSION:

(1) When God names a specific thing to be used in His service, He excludes other things.

(2) Let us look at the LAW OF EXCLUSION:

1. Noah was told to make an ark of gopher wood -- Gen. 6:14
   a. This excluded OAK, PINE, CEDAR and ANY OTHER KIND OF WOOD.

2. Naaman was told to dip seven times in Jordan -- II Kings 5:10
   a. This excluded all other rivers -- II Kings 5:12

3. Christ, in giving the SPECIFIC to SING -- Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
   a. Christ excluded instrumental music.

10. The removal of the LANDMARK OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING from worship and replacing it with special group singing, and adding of instrumental music to singing, makes the worship VAIN -- Matt. 15:9

V. THE LANDMARK OF DOCTRINE IS BEING REMOVED.

1. There is an INDIFFERENCE toward DOCTRINE.

   (1) The CHURCH -- Acts 9:5; 9: 1; 8:3; Acts 2:47; 5:14

   (2) The Plan of Salvation

   (3) Conversion

   (4) Morals

2. Doctrine is NOT STRESSED IN PREACHING.

3. A spirit of compromise with false doctrine is found among many brethren.

   (1) "If a man is honest and sincere, and teaches false doctrine, he is not a false teacher." some say.

   (2) A man may be honest and sincere and still be a false teacher if he teaches false doctrine -- II John 9 - 11 -

      1. "Whosoever" vs. 9

      2. "Any" vs. 10
a. Jesus said MANY will teach false doctrine who are HONEST and SINCERE and be LOST in judgment -- Matt. 7: 21 - 23  
   i. Honest and sincere people can be lawless.

b. Paul was a sincere FALSE TEACHER -- Acts 23:1  
   i. He made havoc of the church -- Acts 23:1  
   ii. He did many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth -- Act 26: 9 - 10  
   iii. He persecuted the church of God, and wasted it -- Gal. 1: 13 - 14  
   iv. In Paul's sincerity, honesty and good conscience, he was a sinner, the chief of sinners -- I Tim. 1: 15

4. Many are teaching that doctrine does not matter in the renewal of churches of Christ.

5. THE NEW TESTAMENT STRESSES DOCTRINAL ACCURACY.
   (1) Tit. 2:1 "Speak . . . sound doctrine"
   (2) II Tim. 4: 2 - 4 "Preach the word"--some "will not endure sound doctrine".  
   (3) II John 9 - 11 "abideth in the doctrine of Christ"
   (4) I Tim. 4:16 "Take heed . . . unto the doctrine"  
   (5) I Pet. 4:11 "Speak as the oracles of God"  
   (6) Gal. 1: 6 - 9 "Not to preach another gospel"  
   (7) Tit. 1:9 "Hold fast the faithful word"  
   (8) I Tim. 1: 3 "Charge some that they teach no other doctrine"

6. THE NEW TESTAMENT WARNS ABOUT DOCTRINES THAT ARE DIFFERENT FROM SOUND DOCTRINE
   (1) Jesus warned to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees -- Matt. 16: 6  
   (2) "Destructive heresies" -- II Pet. 2:1; I Cor. 11:19; I John 2:19  
   (3) "Perverse things" --Acts 20:20  
   (4) Commandment of men -- Matt. 15:9; Tit. 1: 14  
   (5) "Another gospel"--Gal. 1:9  
   (6) "Doctrine of demons"-- I Tim. 4:1  
   (7) The TRADITIONS OF MEN --Col. 2:8  
   (8) The doctrine of Balaam -- Rev. 2:14  
   (9) The doctrine of the Nicolaitans -- Rev. 2:6  
   (10) Vain Babblings -- II Tim. 2:16  
   (11) Various and strange doctrines -- Heb. 13:9

7. IT WAS PREDICTED THAT FALSE DOCTRINE AND FALSE TEACHERS WOULD COME
   (1) The enemy would come and sow tares -- Matt. 13: 24 - 30  
   (2) Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets" -- Matt. 7: 15
8. IT IS OBVIOUS TODAY THAT THERE ARE MANY FALSE DOCTRINES IN THE WORLD

1. DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES:
   
   (1) Many churches
   (2) The church is not essential.
   (3) One church is as good as another.
   (4) Baptism is not essential.
   (5) No pattern of worship.
   (6) There is latter day revelation.
   (7) Many claim they can work miracles today.
   (8) The direct operation of the Spirit saves one.
   (9) Faith only
   (10) Unity-in-diversity -- doctrine does not matter.

2. FALSE DOCTRINES AND CHURCHES OF CHRIST

   (1) INSTITUTIONALISM -- doing the work of the church through HUMAN INSTITUTIONS
   (2) CONTINUAL CLEANSING -- They say that if one is living a good moral life, and striving to do right, his sins are automatically forgiven -- I John 1:5 - 9
   (3) DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE for any reason or cause -- Matt. 19:9 states ONE cause - fornication.
   (4) SOLOS and CHOIR singing in the assembly of worship -- Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19
   (5) CHURCH FURNISHED ENTERTAINMENT -- I Cor. 11:22,34; Rom. 14:17
   (6) YOUTH CHURCHES, SPECIAL YOUTH MEETINGS, YOUTH LECTURES -- There is no more scriptural basis for special interest groups in the church than there is for CLERGY AND LAITY.
      1. Jesus said we are all brethren -- Matt. 23:8
      2. In the church, all don’t have the same ability and work, but no INDIVIDUAL or GROUP is to be EXALTED ABOVE another -- Matt. 23:8-12; Rom. 12:4-10.
      3. A continual emphasis on one SPECIAL GROUP in the body will bring about a schism or division in the body -- I Cor. 12:14-27.
      4. God’s plan for the young is the same one He has for the older people.
      5. The young people’s spiritual needs are the same as the older people’s.
      6. God has one church for ALL -- Eph. 2:16
   (7) SOCIAL DRINKING is alright -- II Pet. 4:3; "Drinking Parties" -- Gal. 5:19-21.
(8) UNITY-IN-DIVERSITY DOCTRINE--Gospel/ doctrine distinction -- the Core gospel concept:

1. Teaching that doctrine is not important.

2. The fundamental premise of the Garrett Ketercherside Unity Movement was Unity-in-Diversity -- these two men believed the churches of Christ and the Christian church should have fellowship . . . in spite of doctrinal disagreements -- over instrumental music in worship, the role of women, inspiration of the Bible, churches doing their work through human institutions.

3. In the early 1970's, a significant group of men among us began parroting the Unity-in-Diversity -- EDWARD FUDGE, ARNOLD HARDIN, BRUCE EDWARDS, MARK NITZ, and several others . . .

4. One tenant or principle of the Unity-in-Diversity movement is that a person who is good, honest and sincere is NOT a FALSE TEACHER EVEN IF WHAT HE TEACHES IS FALSE.

(a) LEROY GARRET said in 1976: "I do not believe, as I was always taught in the sect of which I grew up, that "denominational preachers" are necessarily false teachers, which is the view still urged upon us by many within Christian churches - churches of Christ. I have long since discarded the notion that "our" men are the true teachers while "their" men are the false teachers." Restoration Review, 1976, pg. 262

(b) GARRETT'S CONCEPT SPREADS AMONG US: The ideas being set forth that "no error a man teaches can make him a false teacher unless we can show his character's corrupt."

9. The DOCTRINE OF INDIVIDUALISM as taught by CHARLES HOLT -- "The local church is not an entity" -- "The individual's relation to God is all that matters."

10. The "NO PATTERN" doctrine -- denying the restoration plea to restore the New Testament church.

(1) The concept of restoration is a Bible concept.

1. The Word of God is the standard -- I Pet. 4:11; John 12:48

2. There is in man the inclination to depart from that standard -- I Tim. 4:1-6; Acts 20:28-31

3. There is an ever-present need for RESTORATION TO GOD'S FAVOR BY COMING TO GOD'S WILL AND SUBMITTING TO IT -- Rev. 2:1-5; Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20

11. The ESSENTIALITY OF BAPTISM and the purpose of Baptism is being DENIED by some -- they want fellowship with Denominational churches.

(1) Edward Fudge, in answering the question, "Might one who has never been properly baptized still be regarded as a person justified through faith in Christ? -- Fudge attempted to answer the question in the affirmative, asserting that one is saved "solely by trusting Jesus" and not as the result of "anything we do."" Image, Feb. 1988, pp. 24-25

(2) GENERIC BAPTISM

1. Some are teaching that if one is baptized just to obey God, his baptism is okay.


12. CALVINISM -- The saved are clothed in the "personal righteousness of Christ".

13. The ROLE OF WOMEN in the church -- some are saying you cannot deny any role to a woman in the church because of gender:
(1) Paul denied the work of preaching the gospel publicly to women because of GENDER -- I Cor. 14: 34 - 35; I Tim. 2: 11 - 12

1. The male gender can speak with "all authority" -- Tit. 2:15

2. Women teach under authority -- I Tim. 2 :11 - 12

(2) Paul denied the woman the right to lead public prayer because of gender -- I Tim. 2:8

(3) Paul denied the woman the right to be an elder because of Gender -- I Tim. 3:2 -- "the husband of one wife".

(4) Paul denied the woman the right to be a deacon because of gender -- I Tim. 3:11

(5) Jesus denied the woman the gift of an apostle because of gender -- Eph. 4: 8, 11 - 12

(6) Women have been denied a leadership role in the church because of gender.

14. The DENIAL OF BIBLE AUTHORITY for what is done in worship and the work of the church -- The New Hermeneutics is being taught.

15. The denial of the very NATURE OF THE CHURCH: Some want to regard the church as a denomination -- the Renewal "Churches of Christ" -- they talk about "OUR TRADITION" - "OUR HERITAGE"

(1) Ruble Shelly said, "It was not necessary to leave your tradition".

(2) So, one denomination would be as good as another -- it would not matter what it taught.

16. False doctrine on the HOLY SPIRIT is being taught.

(1) Some today believe they have spiritual gifts.

(2) Some believe they have Apostolic powers.

(3) They believe they have the gift of prophecy.

(4) Spiritual gifts were given to aid in giving REVELATION and to confirm the word -- When the revelation was completed and confirmed, these gifts pass away -- I Cor. 13: 8 - 13; Zech. 13: 1 - 3

17. WHAT SHOULD BE THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ERROR?

(1) WHAT IS GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ERROR?

1. God is against those who teach error -- Jer. 23: 30 - 32; Rom. 16:17

2. God demands we condemn error -- II Tim. 4: 1 - 2; Eph. 5:11

3. We must not endorse one in error -- II John 9 - 11

4. God demands that we test preachers -- I John 4:1; I Thess. 5:21; II John 9 -11

5. The curse of heaven rests upon those who teach error -- Gal. 1: 6 - 9

(2) TRUTH AND ERROR DO NOT HARMONIZE

1. Paul showed this to be true in II Cor. 6: 14 - 17

2. If there is no harmony there can be no agreement.
   
   (a) "can two walk together except they be agreed?" --Amos 3:3

3. A Christian MUST MAINTAIN A PROPER ATTITUDE toward ERROR and stand firmly.
   
   (a) "Abhor that which is evil" --Rom. 12:9
(b) Jesus "hated iniquity" -- Heb. 1: 9
(c) "Neither give place to the devil" -- Eph. 4:27
(d) Not to give place to false teachers -- Gal. 2:5
(e) We are to stand against the wiles of the devil -- Eph. 6:12
(f) We are to stand against error in all forms -- I Thess. 5:22
(g) Stand against digression in all forms.
(h) Stand against worldliness in all forms.

4. The RESULTS of teaching false doctrine:

(a) It destroys the souls of those that are taught -- II Pet. 3: 16-17
(b) It destroys the teacher -- Gal. 1: 6-9; Rev. 22: 18-19
(c) It causes division -- Rom. 16:17
(d) False Doctrine will spread and increase and destroy all the truth in the heart -- II Tim. 2: 16-18
(e) False doctrine separates one from God -- II John 9-11
(f) False doctrine makes worship vain -- Matt. 15:9

5. Can you not see the danger of removing THE LANDMARK of Doctrine?

(a) Let us strive for DOCTRINAL ACCURACY!