

PROTESTANTISM-- ONE OF OUR GREATEST DANGERS

INTRODUCTION:

1. We often hear preachers preach on dangers facing the church.
2. In these lessons we hear sermons on:
 - (1) Worldliness
 - (2) Materialism
 - (3) Institutionalism
 - (4) Catholicism
 - (5) Humanism
3. You never hear the danger of PROTESTANTISM mentioned.
4. I believe one of the greatest threats is PROTESTANTISM.
5. PROTESTANTISM has done great harm to the truth in this world.

I. PROTESTANT'S INFLUENCE ON AMERICAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT:

1. Protestant philosophy wields the greatest influence on American religious thought.
2. The American public has been brainwashed by Protestant philosophy.
3. So much so, that we in the church find that certain basic truths of the New Testament are harder and harder to get over to people.
4. Such truths as:
 - (1) The need for SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY -- Matt. 28:18; II Tim. 3: 16 - 17; John 12:48
 - (2) The ONE CHURCH -- Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:25
 - (3) The SPIRITUAL MISSION of the church -- John 18: 36; Mk. 16: 15 - 16; Rom 14: 17
 - (4) The necessity of BAPTISM -- Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21
 - (5) Grace is CONDITIONAL -- Eph. 2:8; Rom. 5:2
 - (6) Grace is APPROPRIATED through LAW -- Rom. 5:21; Rom. 1:16; Acts 20:24
 - (7) Must have a working faith to be saved -- Gal. 5:6; James 2: 24
 - (8) Must worship WITHOUT INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC and SPECIAL GROUP SINGING -- Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
 - (9) PREACHERS are NOT to be SET APART from other members of the church and called by special titles -- Matt. 23:8
5. Practically ALL denominations in this country have accepted the Protestantism philosophies:
 - (1) They minimize the necessity of Scriptural Authority.
 - (2) They say, "One church is as good as another" and stigmatize as bigots all who deny it.
 - (3) They have accepted the Social Gospel and put denominational churches in the role of social reform with little or no emphasis on SALVATION and IMMORALITY.
 - (4) Baptism is an essential of the New Birth, and salvation as taught in the New Testament is an anathema to them -- John 3: 1 - 5; Acts 2:38; 22:16
6. The Protestant Philosophies have not only influenced the religious people of America, but they have also affected the UNCOMMITTED.
 - (1) It gets harder and harder to convert the uncommitted.
 - (2) They have been brain-washed by the easy-going-do-nothing philosophy of Protestantism, and will reject everything that is critical of it.

II. PROTESTANTISM'S INFLUENCE ON THE CHURCH:

1. The close observer is amazed by the EXTENT to which brethren have absorbed Protestant thought.

2. This fact plays a major role in the controversies of the last 35 years.
3. The MAJORITY of today's problems are the result of brethren having adapted Protestant philosophy.
4. Let us look at some illustrations:

(1) "One church is as good as another"

1. Many brethren have absorbed this philosophy.
2. Not many sermons are preached on the ONE TRUE CHURCH.
3. When these sermons are preached, they are NOT as popular with the BRETHREN as a whole.
4. It is not at all unusual to hear brethren say that they do NOT like preachers who "condemn denominations".
5. Churches try to hold gospel meetings and NOT identify the meeting with the church.
6. Brethren don't want "Church of Christ" on their sign out front.

(2) "Where there is no pattern"

1. This was the cry of brethren who went with institutionalism.
2. This has been the contention of Protestantism throughout the centuries.
3. They have had the erroneous belief that God has not furnished a complete pattern, and thus "anything" goes as long as one is "honest" and "sincere" . (Tit. 2:7)
4. This underlies and explains their "unity in diversity" concept.
5. In the areas of church government, work, worship, the plan of salvation, etc. -- Protestantism has accepted the principle of the free play of human wisdom and imagination.
6. Brethren, having absorbed this well-known Protestant tent, have promoted all kinds of innovations.
7. They look with scorn upon all that would challenge them for "Bible Authority".
8. The same is true with many who suppose to stand with the truth today:
 - (1) The "unity in diversity" concept.
 - (2) Grace without conditions.

(3) The "Social Gospel":

1. The social gospel concept originated in Protestantism.
 - (1) The social gospel exalts the physical above the spiritual, or it eliminates the spiritual altogether.
2. It is preoccupied with "here and now" and not with eternal salvation.
3. The Social Gospel is concerned with:
 - (1) Social problems.
 - (2) It deals with society as a whole.
 - (3) It deals with economics, politics, and public health.
4. The Gospel of Christ is concerned with:
 - (1) Sin -- Rom. 2:23; Luke 19:10
 - (2) With the individual need of salvation -- Mark 16: 15 - 16
 - (3) It focuses on God's grace and Man's faith -- Eph. 2:8
 - (4) Redemption in Christ -- Eph. 1:7
 - (5) Faith, love and hope.
 - (6) Heaven is the ultimate object -- John 14:1 - 6
5. Churches today are very much affected with the social gospel.
 - (1) Institutional churches of Christ:
 1. Build fellowship halls
 2. Run day care centers
 3. Have "Mother's day out"

4. Have counseling services
 5. Have all kinds of human institutions to do welfare work.
- (2) Conservative churches of Christ in some places are moving more and more in the direction of the social gospel:
1. Much of the preaching centers on social problems, not on sin and salvation.
 2. Much preaching deals less and less with redemption, sin, the church, scriptural worship, and salvation.
 3. Many churches want less and less negative preaching.
 4. Many don't want sins exposed and denominationalism opposed.

CONCLUSION:

1. One of our current needs in the church is to "reconvert" many brethren on the uniqueness of the New Testament church.
2. Many are ashamed of the gospel -- Rom. 1:16
3. They have a greater desire to please the world than to please God -- Gal. 1:10
4. Do you still believe that "*Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*"? Matt. 15:13

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