

THE DANGER OF DENOMINATIONALIZING THE CHURCH

LESSON FIVE

INTRODUCTION:

1. The church faces constant danger of being denominationalized in every generation because of the frailty of men.
2. God has ever wanted His people to be a separate people from the world.
 - A. When Balaam spoke the word of God put in his mouth concerning Israel, he said, "*Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.*" Num. 23:9
 - B. Paul said, "*And be not conformed to this world*". Rom. 12:2
 - C. II Cor. 6:17; I Pet. 2:9
3. Let us briefly look at some contributing factors to our departures from the faith.
 - A. The desire to be like others. I Sam. 8: 4 - 5
 - B. Using the language of others. Neh. 13: 23 - 24
 - C. The loss of a desire for sound Doctrine. II Tim. 4: 2 - 4; Gal. 5:7
 - D. Social entanglements. I Cor. 15:33
 - E. Marriage relationships:
 - a. Jews -- Neh. 13: 23 - 24
 - b. Solomon -- I Kings 11:4
 - c. Neh. 13:26

I. ONE OF THE SIGNS OF A DEPARTURE FROM GOD'S ORDER IS A CORRUPTED SPEECH.

1. When the men of God married wives of Ashdod, their children grew up to speak the language of Ashdod, and their identity was imperiled by this corrupted generation. Neh. 13: 23 -25
2. When the language of God's people today is corrupted it is a sign and indication of lost identity, and a departure from Divine Law and authority.
3. A new language is an **EARMARK** that the church is being denominationalized.
4. We think and speak by means of Words.
5. The Holy Spirit has given us God's revelation by means of Words. I Cor. 2:13; Eph. 3:3; II Tim. 1:13; Acts 2:22
6. In order for the church of the New Testament to be **REPRODUCED** in this century, there must be the restoration of the pattern of Sound Words. II Tim. 1:13; Tit. 2:1; I Pet. 4:11

7. Men have no right to change a single Word.
8. The religion that is pure and undefiled is from heaven, and human modifications and arrangements adulterate and defile it, making it vain and void. James 1:27; Matt. 15:7 - 9
9. There are many modern corruptions of New Testament speech:
 - A. "MY CHURCH" -- it is the Lord's church. Matt. 16:18
 - B. "MY CHURCH TEACHES" -- The church of the New Testament is the blood bought people of God and NO TEACHING ORIGINATES WITH THEM.
 - a. Christ has all authority. Matt. 28: 18; James 4:12
 - b. The church teaches the doctrine of Christ. II John 9; I Tim. 3:15
 - C. "JOIN THE CHURCH" -- talking about a person being saved from past sins. The saved are ADDED to the church. Acts 2:47; Acts 5:14
 - D. "OUR PASTOR"
 - a. Talking about the preacher.
 - b. The elders are the pastors. Eph. 4:11
 - c. The one who preaches is an Evangelist or preacher. Eph. 4:11; Acts 21:8; I Tim. 2:7
 - E. "CHURCH OF CHRIST PREACHER"
 - a. Gospel preacher. Mk. 16: 15 - 16; Rom. 1: 15
 - F. "ACCEPT CHRIST" as one's personal Savior.
 - a. Talking about becoming a Christian -- the denominations talk about "accepting Christ as one's personal savior".
 - b. The New Testament talks about:
 - i. Being "*Obedient to the Faith*". Acts 6:7
 - ii. Obeying the Gospel. II Thess. 1:8
 - iii. Obeying the Truth. I Pet. 1: 22
 - iv. "*Obey Him*". Heb. 5:9
 - v. "*Obey from the heart that form of doctrine*". Rom. 6:17
 - G. "THE LAITY" -- making a distinction between the preacher and the members.
 - a. "Ye are Brethren." Matt. 23: 5 - 12
 - H. "THE SACRAMENT" -- for the Lord's Supper. I Cor. 11:20

I. "MY DENOMINATION"

- a. The church is not a denomination.
- b. The church universal is the whole of the saved. Matt. 16:18

J. "REVIVALS"

- a. We don't have revivals, we have Gospel Meetings.
- b. The church conducts Gospel Meetings -- the church invites saints and sinners to come and hear the gospel.
- c. The local church is to hold forth the gospel to the world. I Tim. 3:15

K. "YOUTH FORUMS"

L. "YOUTH RALLIES"

M. "EDUCATIONAL DIRECTORS"

N. "CLINICS" and "WORKSHOPS"

O. "CHURCH RELATED SCHOOLS"

P. "A new congregation called a MISSION"

Q. "ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY" and "HOMECOMING"

R. "YOUTH MINISTER"

S. "ASSOCIATE MINISTER"

T. "THE SPONSORING CHURCH"

U. "RECONSECRATIONS"

V. "MINISTERS OF MUSIC"

W. "CHURCH KITCHENS"

X. "FELLOWSHIP HALLS"

Y. "DEGREES OF PUNISHMENT"

II. THERE IS A DANGER OF THE CHURCH LOSING ITS PRIMITIVE SIMPLICITY.

1. II Cor. 11:3
2. The church is a Divine institution and is Divinely guided. Eph. 1: 22 - 23
3. Men have strong opinions and frequently those opinions do not agree with Divine wisdom.
4. Men look around about them and see all kinds of activities that, from a human standpoint, look very good.

- A. Gradually these are added to the worship of the church, and to the work of the church until the church loses much of its original simplicity -- and is denominationalized.
 - B. Through human wisdom, the worship becomes a showy series of activities, with little congregational participation.
 - a. Choirs
 - b. Special Speakers
 - c. Instrumental Music
5. When churches leave the simplicity of the work and worship of the New Testament church, they also leave the Essence of the gospel.
- A. They use every kind of a gimmick to get people in the church, but the one thing they need -- the gospel.
 - a. Benevolence
 - b. Parties and fun, and "Fellowship Halls"
 - c. Friendship
 - d. Other carnal means
 - B. Many dilute and water-down the teaching of the New Testament until it loses its power.
 - a. Interpretations of men become confused with New Testament teaching. I Cor. 4:6
 - b. Attempts to achieve unity by compromise.
 - c. Customs and traditions take on the nature of Divine Law.
 - d. Undue freedom in the name of expediency. I Cor. 10:23

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