

“Change: Part Three”

Rev. 22:19; Deut. 4:2; 12:32

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Introduction

- I. Change is generally considered both a good thing and an inevitable thing.
- II. Not all change is good, nor should it be considered as a matter of fact.
- III. There are some current changes being made in the church of Christ that are not pleasing to God.

Discussion

- I. One of the most apparent and widespread changes in some congregations is the implementation of instrumental music in attempts to worship God.
 - A. This change has been viewed by some as a matter of opinion and not a matter of faith.
 - B. The problem with that line of thinking is that we must always remember that authority is required for what we do in worship to God (Col. 3:17).
 - C. The Old Testament, “our tutor,” plainly demonstrates God's disapproval of attempting to worship Him in ways that are beyond what He authorized (Gen. 4:1-5; Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17; Lev. 10:1-2).
 - D. In regard to music in worship, God has explicitly authorized only one form, singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
 1. Mechanical instruments were widely available in the first century.
 2. There is historical evidence that the early church did not use such instruments.
 - F. We should not be concerned with worship being pleasing to us, we should be concerned about worship being pleasing to God.
- II. Along the same lines, there has been a push in recent history to advocate the usage of what has been commonly termed “praise teams.”
 - A. To the world, and the unlearned in the church, “praise teams” seem like an acceptable form of fulfilling God's command to sing.
 - B. When one looks at such closer, there are reasons that “praise teams” present problems.
 1. “Praise Teams” are a select few in a congregation that are allowed publicly to be amplified and presented before the church due to their “vocal abilities.”
 - a. We need to remember that our worship to God is not to entertain us or necessary be aesthetically pleasing to us.
 - b. This same line of thinking has led to inclusion of choirs, soloists and bands.
 - c. It could also promote the idea that since my voice is not a “good singing voice,” then I will be fine by not singing.
 2. The members of the “teams” then co-direct the congregation in worship.

- a. A major problem with this approach is that often times, “praise teams” are composed of both men and women.
 - b. It is a violation of Scripture, therefore a sin, for women to be leading over men in attempts to worship God (1 Tim. 2:8-15).
 - c. This is true whether she is the only song leader or one of many.
- C. The only “praise team” that the church of Christ needs when we sing in worship to God is every member of the church of Christ praising God.

III. Another sad change that has taken place in many congregations is the open fellowship of error (individually and congregationally).

A. The prevailing idea for so many today is that so long as we believe in Jesus as the Son of God, then we can be in fellowship (communion/joint participation).

- 1. While belief in Jesus as the Son of God is imperative to spiritual fellowship, it is not the only factor.
- 2. One may hold true to acknowledging the Lord, but may teach, practice and/or support many other beliefs that are contrary to truth.

B. Spiritual fellowship among men must hinge first on their joint fellowship with God (1 John 1:1-3, 6-7; 2 John 9-11).

- 1. If one is practicing the truth, and the other is practicing error, then there cannot be fellowship amongst the two.
- 2. This is a basic fact, and must not be altered just because someone is a “good person,” family member or friend.

C. Christians are commanded to reject the “unity in diversity” doctrine (again 2 John 9-11; Eph. 5:11; Gal. 1:6-10; Jas. 4:4).

D. When we, the church of Christ, affirm or approve of such error by attending/participating in the services of those in error, speaking as if one “church” is just as good as another and stop pleading for true unity, I can only imagine the way our Lord feels about His bride (Eph. 4:4-6, 13).

Conclusion

- I. Change is not always good!
- II. We must continue to teach that God's ways are still the best ways (Isa. 55:8-9; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).
- III. These are just a few of the “changes” that man has sought to implement contrary to the will of God
- IV. We will continue to study more “change,” Lord willing, in the next sermon in this series.