

Count the Cost of Leaving the Old Paths

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Straight Paths Bible Church

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

- I. All people who call themselves Christians, and especially the preachers and teachers and singers who have a position of influence, who are leaving the old paths, need to consider some things.
 - A. First of all, there is no turning back.
 - B. Once you abandon the old ways you are committed, and so are those who follow you.
 - C. If these new ways lead to something bad (and they certainly will) you have committed a great evil and will answer to God for the souls that are lost and the damage to the kingdom of God.
 - D. What is your true motive for abandoning the tried and proven ways of worship?
 1. Is it really the Almighty God, who is holy in all his works, that is the object of this new kind of worship?
 2. Or is it to please the people and follow what is trending?
 3. Does it come from a sense of responsibility as a pastor toward the sheep, or does it come from a desire to be accepted and approved by the people?
 4. Is the motivation spiritual or carnal? – Are you being led by the Holy Spirit of God that guides us into all truth, or are you being led by what feels better to your fleshly desires?
 - E. This new kind of worship ...does a sinner feel uncomfortable or can he fit in also, even in his unconverted state?
 - F. Where will it lead our children and grandchildren if we abandon the old ways of worship and embrace the “contemporary” worship?
 - G. Most of all – is it acceptable to God?
 1. The answer to that question is an absolute “NO, it most certainly is not acceptable to God.”

Ephesians 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Psalms 19:14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

1 Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

- H. This has happened many times before through history, it is really nothing new, or contemporary – it is the same old method of Satan to bring confusion and destroy the work of God, and to bring reproach upon God through those who are called his people.
- II. Changing the manner of worship services:
 - A. What does the music really do?
 1. It changes the atmosphere completely.

2. Music is the language of emotion, so the type of music determines the feelings and emotions that are going to be aroused.
 3. Music that has the flavor of the world is not going to arouse genuine feelings toward God, but feelings that are earthy, sensual, and devilish.
 4. Music that comes from the heart of an unconverted sinner is not going to cause God's people to worship God, but will have the exact opposite effect.
 5. The music of rebellion will not inspire to submission and obedience to God.
 6. The music of violence, anger, and death will not motivate people to love, patience, kindness, mercy, and forgiveness.
 7. The music of drinking, adultery, fornication, and divorce will not inspire to faithfulness and purity – not matter what words you put to the music.
- B. Adding certain instruments also totally changes the atmosphere of the gathering.
1. Drums, electric guitars, steel guitars, synthesizers, electronically distorted sounds (like fuzz boxes)
- C. Creating an atmosphere of a worldly gathering, such as a concert, night club, honky-tonk, or dance hall, carnival, or saloon.
- D. Having big screens in the church changes the atmosphere completely. The focus of everyone is on a screen (an image) instead of a person and on the truth of the Word of God.
- E. Where is this going to take your children and grandchildren?
- F. What kind of idea are they going to have of God?
- G. Will they realize that there is any difference in the lost and the saved?
- H. When they are programmed to think there is no difference what makes you think they would continue to be concerned about living for God or having anything to do with the church?

III. Changing the preaching:

- A. The presentation – the regard it is afforded by the preacher and by the congregation.
1. When the preacher dresses down he is dishonoring the office, the Word of God, the sacred desk, and God himself, who he is speaking for and representing.
 2. It matters greatly.
- B. The content (the subjects preached upon)
1. Instead of truth there are fables – that is stories and illustrations and light-hearted motivational talks.
 2. Instead of study and prayer the message is prepared from memes and articles from the Internet and social media that he has filled his mind with through the week.
 3. A true man of God should have bread from heaven to give – not slop from the dumpsters of the world.
 4. The standard should be held high right here in every aspect of the office and the position, and the performance of it.
- C. The target
1. Preaching that is not directed to sinners and to saints is not preaching, but simply motivational speeches or entertainment for them.
- D. The objective or goal
1. To edify and educate the children of God.

2. To preach the truth to sinners so the Holy Spirit of God can convict their hearts.
3. His Sword should be sharp and he should not be chopping with a dull axe.

IV. Giving up the tried and proven for the new and unknown.

- A. Turning from what has long been established as holy to follow patterns and trends of the sinful world.
- B. The ceremonial sacrifices and public worship of God in the tabernacle and in the temple were prescribed in great detail as to how it was to be done – there was no variance or change allowed by God.
 1. Likewise, we have a long history of how things should be done and we should not burn those bridges, but take what has been delivered to us at great cost and cherish it and preserve it for our children and grandchildren.
- C. Changing the way sinners come to God.
 1. Making salvation so easy that it is “easier than joining the Boy Scouts.”
 2. This muddies the waters and dooms souls to hell because they are persuaded to embrace a false hope by someone who is simply trying to put another feather in his own hat.

V. We need to learn to be content with the old ways and what we have received from those who have gone before us.

- A. If we are not separated from the world around us we will never be satisfied with the old ways while everyone else is rocking and swinging and having the big crowds and making all the noise.
- B. We need to learn really well what true riches are and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.
- C. We need to learn to love the old ways and the old paths – because therein is the good way, and therein is there rest for our souls.
- D. In heaven the worship is going to be much more like the old ways than these new ways – you can count on that.