

Denominational Churches of Christ

by Bill Crews

Most of our denominational neighbors and friends do not know this, but there are many churches that profess to be churches of Christ (which should mean, simply, churches that belong to Christ) that have been led by preachers who were wolves in sheep's clothing to slowly transform themselves into another denomination which calls itself "Church of Christ." (In a few instances they have also changed their name.) These preachers have done their work more privily and cowardly than honestly and openly. Had they been "up front," and clearly and honorably identified their convictions and intentions from the beginning, they would not have successfully led so many down the pathway of apostasy. Rather than burdening the world with yet another denomination, they should have chosen to cast their lot with one of the already existing ones. They chose instead to take the pathway suggested more than three decades ago by Leroy Garrett. He wrote with seeming glee about how some younger preachers among us (who were already making "uncertain sounds") would lead "the Churches of Christ, kicking and screaming, into the twentieth century." He made his meaning clear, and now his desire has become a widespread reality. Karl Ketcherside and Leroy Garrett, and those who promoted their writings, have had so much to do with the present apostasy.

There Are Now Many So-Called "Churches Of Christ":

1. Who apologize to the religious world for having taught that the Scriptures furnish a binding pattern for anything, except perhaps to just love God and love one another.
2. Who regard the honest and sincere people of just about all churches as Christians and therefore their spiritual brethren.
3. Who believe that the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship is simply a matter of human judgment and personal taste.
4. Who see nothing wrong with women leading songs and prayers in church assemblies, preaching, teaching classes that include men, and serving as elders and deacons.
5. Who freely participate in interdenominational religious services and "exchange pulpits" with denominational preachers (and Max Lucado is not a gospel preacher).
6. Who have Easter and Christmas celebrations.
7. Who embrace much of the charismatic movement in regard to how the Holy Spirit works among believers today.
8. Who see nothing wrong with choirs, choruses, quartets and solos in our song services.
9. Who teach that we are not limited to the first day of the week in observing the Lord's supper or in congregational giving.
10. Who deny that baptism is a command of God essential to the sinner's forgiveness and who parrot Calvinism in their teaching about saving faith and grace.
11. Who do not object to such distinctions as "clergy" and "laity."
12. Who have no problem with referring to preachers as "pastors" or addressing them as "reverend."

Most of our readers will read this and weep, but a few will rejoice to hear that it has happened ("Well, it's about time." "That's the kind of Church of Christ I've been looking for.") But it is nothing more than history repeating itself. As it did in the last half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. The result then was the Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) denomination. What opened the door to such things? (1) The insistence upon church support of human educational and benevolent institutions. (2) The embracing of the "sponsoring church" (which can receive unlimited funds from

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