

ON DEPARTURES

Now many may well be in a better position to write these lines than am I, but I shall endeavor to do it all the same. Have you noticed that there are many departures from the faith around us today? That implies, of course, that many Christians are leaving the Truth, and in its place they are embracing error. One cannot "depart" from that in which he/she never resided. I do know, from personal experience, that many places, once bastions of Truth, are now havens for error. Why is this? What is there to do about this?...

Some congregations depart through ignorance. Some leave through neglect. Some leave to get numbers. Some depart due to the influence of ungodly men in pulpits and elderships. Whatever the reason, it is sinful. It is never right to leave the Truth—it matters not who says you should or what rewards appear to be in the offing for those who do.

As to what there is to do about it, there is much. I have never worked with a Congregation (as a located preacher) in which liberalism/sectarianism/modernism/denominationalism or the like has taken over. I have preached where they tried to take over. I have left due to the efforts of those who tried to take over—but only after their efforts were defeated and shown to be what they were. But some, sadly, have not been so fortunate.

I recently spoke with a friend who was on the "losing side" of a battle for Truth. I do not say that Truth lost, but that the group opposing the Truth had more votes and thereby controlled the property. Of course, unless they repent they will burn in Hell for their sinful vote, but they can enjoy the fruits of the labor of godly and sound men and women between now and then as they pervert His Word and violate His Precepts. That friend told me of his struggle, and of the struggle of those who, like himself, loved the Truth, and it was indeed a valiant example.

They did what all preachers used to do—they cited the Scriptures and reasoned from them. That is what we all must do. Stand on the Book! If you do not have the votes and ultimately Truth cannot carry the day, then leave that congregation—it has ceased to be a faithful congregation—and start another one or go to a sound one. Simple enough.

The sign on the property does not guarantee the soundness of the assembly. Do not be afraid to speak up—Truth is His and must be spoken. So what if the money is on the side of the false teachers? So what if the departing ones are bankers or lawyers or business owners? When they set themselves against the Truth, they must be opposed. Have the courage to speak in defense of the Truth. God will not forget your labors (1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 6:10).

—Tim Smith
Dothan, AL