

PARABLE OF THE LOST LIMB

A small sore appeared on Mrs. Smith lower leg. An incompetent doctor treated it as inconsequential. When he finally realized that the lady had a problem, his treatments were inadequate and too late. After a few months at his ineffective hands, the poor lady sought another doctor who immediately saw the wound was morbid. In spite of his best efforts, gangrene spread and the leg had to be amputated at the knee. The doctor she had trusted to care for her had miserably failed in his duty. His patient suffered serious loss.

The body of Christ has wounds that must be tended or else they too will cause great harm. These wounds have been inflicted by those who should be her friends (Zech. 13:6). Some brethren, among them preachers, youth ministers and campus workers, have taken it upon themselves to change many of her essential features. Each unscriptural change is a wound inflicted on the body. Left unattended these wounds will fester and grow. Gangrene will result (II Tim. 2:17).

Elders and preachers are God's appointed physicians to tend to and maintain the health of his church. Tragically in hundreds of cases they are behaving like the careless physician. They are unaware of her wounds, or unconcerned about them. They fail to realize the danger. They are loath to treat the problem. Because of their incompetence or their neglect, the wounds are daily worsening and unless given immediate attention will result in tragic loss. Members will be lost, even entire congregations will be corrupted and lost.

Just as that Ms. Smith's doctor was guilty of malpractice for his neglect of his patient's wound, so are those preachers and elders who fail to treat the wounds on the body of Christ before the condition becomes critical. Let all who accept the privilege of leading Christ's people understand their responsibility to care for his church as good physicians. JHW