

FOLKS WHO OUTGROW THE CHURCH

Children outgrow their cloths and toys. Some families outgrow their houses. Some schools and businesses outgrow their facilities. Such cases as these are normal and of no moral consequence. But some people think they have outgrown their humble parents, or their mates of many years. Such is shameful. Worse still is the preacher of college professor who feels he has outgrown the church of Christ. Such is not only shameful, but pathetic and sinful!

Some of our change agents think they have outgrown the old biblical idea of one church which Christ founded (Matt. 16:18) and over which he is head (Eph. 1:22). They have outgrown the old biblical view that denominationalism is contrary to God's will (I Cor. 1:10-13). Some have outgrown the old Bible-based doctrines of the Christian religion. They have graduated to broader, grander themes learned at the feet of theologians in denominational seminaries.

Some have outgrown the old view that the word of God is God-given, and therefore inerrant. They see the Bible as a lovely old document that must be subjected to human wisdom and philosophy and corrected to fit modern understandings.

Some have outgrown the simple worship that served the first generation of Christians. Some yearn for ritual, others for high emotionalism. Some crave entertainment and performers. Some have outgrown the mere singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19) and clamor of organs or folk bands.

Some have outgrown old-fashioned Bible preaching. They have moved on to story-telling, personal experiences and drama.

Some have outgrown the terms of salvation declared by the Lord and his apostles and preached by our fathers. Faith, repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38), are now passe' to such. They have now increased in worldly wisdom to the point that they have decided salvation is by grace through faith, such as has long been held and preached by their Protestant neighbors.

Some have outgrown their fathers in the faith. They are embarrassed by the likes of David Lipscomb, N. B. Hardeman, Guy Woods or Gus Nichols. They long to embrace Billy Graham and Robert Shuller, Rick Warren and Bill Hybels.

They have outgrown the name "church of Christ" and do not wish to be known as such. They prefer to hide behind anonymous labels such as "Community Church " or Neighborhood Church".

Children who outgrown their parents who gave them life, nurtured, fed and clothed them are unworthy offspring who deserve the contempt of all. The preacher who has outgrown the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is no less contemptible. He should be shunned and rejected by all who love the Master and his blessed church (Rom. 16:17).

JHW