

LOOKING FOR AN HONEST MAN

History relates the strange story of the Cynic philosopher, Diogenes of Sinope (died ca. 320 BC). It is said that he was seen walking about Athens in broad daylight with a lantern in hand. When asked what he was doing, he replied that he was searching for an honest man!

A situation has developed in our midst today to which this illustration is fitly applicable. It is no secret that a widespread movement of change is sweeping through the brotherhood of churches of Christ. When speaking to their sympathizers, the boldest of these promoters of change blush not to ridicule and castigate churches of Christ, their predecessors in the faith and those who still cling to the faith of their fathers. In those sympathetic environments they hesitate not to speak approvingly of instrumental music in worship, of women in church leadership roles, of the church of Christ as a humanly created denomination. They renounce the very name "church of Christ" and seek acceptance among the churches of evangelical Protestantism.

But when one not of their band one talks with or corresponds with these change agents, he will be impressed that none of them want to publicly go on record that they have in fact abandoned the church of Christ and no longer wish to be associated with them.

- a) None of them will freely wish to admit that they are now something other than simple Bible Christians, members of something other than the church of Christ they once were part of.
- b) They do not like to admit that they prefer acceptance and approval by their denominational neighbors over that of the majority of their brothers and sisters of the church of Christ whose faith is based solidly on Scripture!
- c) They avoid admitting that their changes will so profoundly affect the fundamental nature of the church, her faith and worship that when implemented the congregation will cease to be a church of Christ.
- d) They do not care to acknowledge that they are willing to dismiss Biblical authority in favor of "public opinion," to gain numbers, to please worldly post-moderns and keep them in their churches.
- e) They are determined to evade admitting that they have learned their new gospel from denominational sources. They protest it is thoroughly biblical.
- f) Of all the Christian Colleges and Universities that have embraced the change agenda, not one of them will openly acknowledge that they are no longer loyal to the church whose members gave them birth, nurtured and financed them to their present state of prosperity. While embracing and promoting their destructive change agenda they loudly protest they are faithful as always to their constituency. They still recruit our children and seek our contributions and bequests for their treasury, even while harboring men and promoting teaching that can only bring wreck and ruin to the Lord's church. Peter warns us of those who would make merchandise of us (II Pet. 2:3).

Among the proud intellectuals of ancient Athens, old Diogenes had a hard time finding truthful, honest men. Should he return today and launch a search for honest men among the promoters of change, he would have the same problem. Remember that "True honesty takes into account the claims of God as well as those of man" (C. Simmons). God also is looking for good and honest hearts, for only they can bring forth the fruits of righteousness (Luke 8:15).

JHW