

## EXCHANGE WITH AN OFFENDED CHANGE AGENT

Dear Mr. Waddey: I want to tell you that I appreciate your effort in glorifying God and in uplifting the body. Although, while I appreciate this effort, it is more out of respect that you are doing the best you know how instead of appreciation for the uprising and pain you have caused through your words. I grew up in the church of Christ. I have seen first hand what some would term conservative and what some would term liberal. I have a well-rounded education of the "denominational" world. Some of that knowledge from education, but most of it through first hand experience in my relationship with many believers. I am not writing this, Mr. Waddey, to confront you or to change your mind. I just would like you to be aware of the pain you have ignited by encouraging others to close their minds and kill anyone that does not believe the way they do. You may say, "That's an extreme example!" Well, Mr. Waddey, I have seen it happen first hand, and have felt it happen to myself and my family. I am in full time ministry. I am NOT what some would term your normal, conservative, in the box preacher. God has led me to a different path. He has not led me to fit in the box because, well to put it bluntly, I don't find a box anywhere in His word. I haven't yet, Mr. Waddey, found anywhere a description of the exact parameters for preachers or for that fact Christians. Except this, that we love God with all our being and love our neighbor as our self. I believe those are words directly from Jesus Himself. I also believe He termed that the greatest command. Mr. Waddey, here's my question. Where does your so called 'battle' fit in that greatest command? I can't find it. Instead your publications led people from the church I work with to cause a division because we didn't teach their cultism believe system. The system that states that EVERYONE must fit the box! It caused them to term me a change agent! Well Mr. Waddey, if I am a change agent, then God must love change agents because Max Lucado, Rick Warren, Howard Norton, Jeff Walling, Jimmy Sportsman, Monty Leavell and I, well we're reaching a ton of people for Christ and He continues to bless us all! Strange isn't it? Your uprising almost killed me, Mr. Waddey. Physically and spiritually. I am a white American. My wife is a black American. Your uprising has caused some to be racist toward our family. It has caused some to fear the body of Christ because of the disunity you have been preaching about. Mr. Waddey, I would beg you, by the grace of God, be careful what you believe and teach. Because honestly, Mr. Waddey, your doing more damage than glorifying.

In Christ's Love, MG

Dear Bro. M:

Thank you for writing and sharing your experience and thoughts with me.

- Are you still associated with the people known as churches of Christ?
- Is it a church of Christ for which you preach?
- Would you not agree that you are in no way typical of the kind of preacher a member of a church of Christ have the right to expect for their minister?
- If you wish to hold, believe and practice doctrines different than those held by churches of Christ, perhaps you should find a denominational body that shares your faith and work for them.
- You say that God has led you in a different path than the typical preacher of the church of Christ. Perhaps you could explain just how God led you in your different path. Also, how do you know it was God that led you rather than your own desire?
- If you wish to find the parameters God has set for those who preach in his church, you should read your New Testament and in particular the epistles of Timothy and Titus. Among the expectations he has for his preachers are that they "preach the word and be urgent in season and out of season, that they reprove, rebuke and exhort (II Tim. 4:2). He wanted them to "Hold to the pattern of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13). He wanted them to "speak things which befit the sound doctrine" (Tit. 2:1). If you were doing this, it is not likely that some of your hearers would have been moved to leave your congregation.
- I have not written anything critical of racially mixed marriages. My study of Scripture reveals nothing against such unions. Thus any objections in that category stems from some other source.
- That Max Lucado, Rick Warren, Jeff Walling and other change agents are able to attract large numbers to their gatherings really proves nothing. I have seen thousands at a circus, a football game and a musical concert, but that proved nothing about God's blessing on the assembly or the promoters thereof. Sun Moon of Korea has a following that staggering any of those you mention, as do the Mormons, Catholics and Jehovah's Witnesses.

- It seems that you identify yourself with these men who have embraced denominationalism and rejected our commitment to restore the faith and practice of the church of the Bible. Why then should you be surprised that those who love the church of Christ and wish to maintain their faith should not wish for you to be their preacher?
- You imply that the faith, worship and practice of churches of Christ is a "cultism belief system." If you insult those who love the church and hold our faith in such low esteem, why should they contribute their money to help with your support?
- You are preaching a different doctrine than that held by loyal members of the church of Christ, why are you surprised that they rebelled against your preaching. You agree is not "your traditional conservative" message?
- John tells us if a man comes to us and bringeth not this teaching (the doctrine of Christ) we are not to receive him or encourage him (II John 10-11). Thus if you have embraced a new, different doctrine, one different from that revealed in the New Testament, the brethren did the right thing in rejecting you.
- Your statement that my teaching almost killed you is a rather dramatic exaggeration. It may have crimped your plans to change the church into something new and different, but it certainly did not create or even suggest any harm to your physical well being.
- While you have the right to believe anything you wish, you do not have the right to preach and promote that in a congregation of Christians who wish to follow the Word of God and that alone.
- You cite the great commandments, to love God and our neighbor and ask where my battle plan fits into them? The same bible that teaches us to love God and neighbor also teaches us to contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3), to fight the good fight of the faith (I Tim. 6:12) to be set for the defense of the gospel (Phil.1:16). That is what we are doing.
- Just for your information, not only are we fighting against those who are corrupting the faith and change the church into a denomination, we are preaching the gospel, seeking and saving the lost, caring for those in need and building up the church.

I close with the hope that you will consider your ways. Pride often drives one to think that he has found a new and better way...when in reality is he is only promoting his own way If you truly love the church of Christ, if you wish to stay among us and serve the Lord, then return to the simple message and way of Scripture. The Bible calls that the old paths and exhorts us to walk therein (Jer. 6:16). You can yet be of service to the Lord and his church, but only if you are willing to "speak..the things which befit the sound doctrine" (Tit. 2:1). . If I can help you do that I will be most happy to do so.

JHW