

When is change dangerous and sinful?

(by George Battey)

As Barak Obama and John McCain campaign for the office of President of the United States, each one is claiming they are a “*change agent*.” They promise to bring change to Washington. Each candidate promises that if he is elected things are going to change.

People like to hear that. Many people are convinced there needs to be change in Washington and this idea of electing someone who will go in and “shake things up” has a popular appeal.

The same thing is going on in churches. There are churches which advertise and present themselves as different. They appeal to the public as a church which is changing. They speak of “*organized religion*” in a negative way and promise they are different. They are different:

- In the music they have.
- In the way they present their message.
- They are different in the actual message they present.

They’re different than traditional churches and they’re changing with the times.

Now ... our question this week is this: *When is change dangerous and sinful?* When is it wrong to change?

1) It’s wrong to change when the change is away from the revealed will of God.

God has revealed His entire will in the pages of scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV)

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

According to this passage, there is not one thing a person needs in this life to guide him besides the written scriptures alone. They supply all the needs a person has.

Matthew 4:4 (NKJV)

4 ... "It is written, [Jesus said] 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Anyone advocating change from what is written in scripture is advocating a change that is sinful and dangerous.

Galatians 1:8 (NKJV)

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, **let him be accursed.**

Here the danger is clearly spelled out. Anyone advocating change from what the apostles taught is in danger of being accursed from God.

2) **It is dangerous and sinful to change from what one vowed to do before God.**

Every day men and women who have vowed faithfulness to their spouse violate that sacred vow by committing fornication or adultery with a third person.

Every day men and women who have vowed faithfulness to God Himself violate that sacred promise by forsaking His law and deciding to live their lives in their own way.

These are changes, but they are dangerous and sinful changes.

Jeremiah 34:10-11 (NKJV)

10 Now when all the princes and all the people, who had entered into the covenant, heard that everyone should set free his male and female slaves, that no one should keep them in bondage anymore, they obeyed and let them go.

11 But afterward **they changed their minds** and made the male and female slaves return, whom they had set free, and brought them into subjection as male and female slaves.

Here are people who had made slaves out of their fellow Jewish brethren. First they changed for the good. They realized it was wrong to enslave their brethren and they set all their brethren free from slavery. “*But afterward,*” the scripture says, “*they changed their minds and made the male and female slaves return, whom they had set free, and brought them into*” slavery again.

- *Change is good if one is ceasing to do evil and starting to do good* (Isa 1:16-17). The Bible word that describes this sort of change is the word “repentance.” We must repent or we will perish Jesus said (Lk 13:3).
- *Change is dangerous and sinful if one stops doing good and returns to evil.* This is what the Jews were doing in the days of Jeremiah.

This is exactly what people are doing when:

- They change moral standards.
- They change the worship regulations of the Bible.
- They change the requirements of salvation set forth in scripture.

Ecclesiastes 5 (NKJV)

*2 Do not be rash with your mouth,
And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God.
For God is in heaven, and you on earth;
Therefore let your words be few.*

*4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it;
For He has no pleasure in fools.
Pay what you have vowed —*

5 Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

When a person vows a vow before God, whether a marriage vow or a vow of loyalty to God Himself, it is dangerous and sinful to change.

A person would be better to never vow loyalty than to vow and change (2 Pet 2:21).

CONCLUSION

Everyone seems excited over the presidential campaign because all the candidates involved are calling themselves “change agents.” They’re going to go to Washington to “shake things up.”

But we need to be very careful about the sort of changes we get excited about. Some changes are not for the good, but for the bad. You may rest assured, any change from what God has revealed in scripture is not a change for the good.

ANNOUNCEMENT

To speak with someone from the congregation in person, call: **770-946-4532** or **770-946-3117**.

GOD’S PLAN OF SALVATION

Five steps in God’s plan of salvation:

- 1) **Hear** the word of God (Rom 10:17).
- 2) **Believe** Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 16:16).
- 3) **Repent** of sins (change from living a sinful life) (Acts 2:38).
- 4) **Confess** your faith verbally before men (Rom 10:10).
- 5) **Be baptized** (immersed) in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19) for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Mark 16:16 (NKJV)

16 He who **believes** and is **baptized** will be saved; ...

Acts 2:38 (NKJV)

38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; ...

After being baptized, one must continue to be faithful (Acts 2:42; Mt 28:20; Rev 2:10).