

## Making the Correct Change

Just the other day I was thumbing through a magazine and came across an ad for a product that declared, "Change is terrible." This was said, of course, to reassure consumers that the product remained the same reliable one that they were accustomed to. There are some things that we do not want to change. Then, one sometimes hears the challenge, "Change or die." Obviously, there are some things in life that need to change.

What should change when men and women find themselves at odds with the teaching of the Lord Jesus? There are only two alternatives: Change the person or change the Bible, the rules by which we are intended to live. Historically, people have resisted changing themselves even to the point of condemnation, preferring rather to try to change God's inspired word. Stephen called such people "...*stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears (Acts 7:51).*" Seemingly, some attempts to retranslate the Bible, when there are already many modern language versions in existence, will continue until man gets something he thinks he can live with. Still others have declared that the tradition of the church, as determined by synods, conventions, conclaves, councils, etc., is authoritative where the Bible is not. Others have attempted to reconcile their peculiar teaching with the Bible by writing equally peculiar denominational handbooks, doctrines and rules of faith. Yet, the Bible affirms that when man conflicts with God, "*We ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).*" A doctrine that includes more than the Bible, includes too much; if it is less than the Bible, it is too little; if it is the same as the Bible, it is unnecessary.

Jehovah has expressed His will in the Bible, because "... *the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. (Jer. 10:23).*" God did not instill within us the ability to govern our lives apart from Him. It matters not how many may agree upon a doctrine, a tradition or a philosophy (Ex. 23:2), if it is inconsistent with the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 6-11) it must be rejected or changed, for the doctrine of Christ remains changeless (Lk. 21:33; 1 Pet. 1:24-25). No matter what the religious institution, how popular the philosophy, how wonderful the family, how dear the relationship, or how old the tradition, Christ's word must, and will, prevail (Mat. 15:7-14; 10:33-40; Col. 2:6-9). All of us then, at one time or another, will hear something from the Bible that makes us initially uncomfortable, or perhaps even angry. When we do, and we surely will, let us remember that the change that is mandated must occur in us (Rom. 12:1-2), for God will accept us only on His terms (2 Tim. 2:15). The Word of God remains settled forever (Psm. 119:89).

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