

Enough of the Issues, How About the Facts?

Making the rounds and being hurled from the pulpits of some college lectureships, workshops, and local congregational lectureships are the charges of "heresy," "apostasy," "liberalism," "modernism," "legalism," etc., ad infinitum. Brethren stand before both large and small audiences of churches, college lectureships, write in their bulletins, and send in articles to the religious papers charging "certain" brethren are leading us into apostasy once again.

The common phrase repeated is, "at a 'certain' college" so and so is going on. Parroted also are the cliches, "a 'certain' well-known preacher has gone liberal" or "the writer (or editor) of a 'certain' religious journal espouses such and such a view." Brethren, if a false teacher warrants the time and energy to accuse him of "heresy," "apostasy," "liberalism," or any other "ism," then he is deserving to be named.

I tire of my brethren who seem to have neither the information or the courage when they speak on who and where damnable doctrines are being taught. I come away from brethren who revel in accusations without giving the full facts feeling as if I'd been blindfolded, handed a "verbal" tail with a pin in it, and sent out to find a heretic donkey on which to tack it. Making vague statements and insinuations about the integrity or soundness of a brother based on hearsay or imagined fear is unethical and completely out of character of a Christ-like heart. Straw men are being tied and stood up from gossip and suspicion by brethren who like to take "pot shots" at anything or anyone with which they disagree. If that is not so then let those who are so quick to make damaging charges have the intestinal fortitude to give *all* the facts — names, places, dates, documents and *accurate quotes*. Enough of this "certain" colleges, brethren, and papers. Brother *Certain*, *Certain* Christian Colleges, and *Certain* Gospel papers *do not exist*. If the false teacher and his heresy is known to the writer or speaker, then let him pin the tail on the heretic instead of blindfold-

ing us with ambiguous statements and sending us to search out the villain who belongs to the tail (or tale).

Our scriptural precedent is to name names and expose the disorder before it is allowed to spread. To fail to do this with the "facts" is to give aid and comfort to the enemies of the gospel. *John* named names (3 John 9:11). Paul did the same (2 Tim. 4:10, 14, 15). Revelation names the churches by location as well as the charges against them. Paul said, "mark them" and "avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). Again, he told the churches of Christ at Thessalonica "note that man" (2 Thess. 3:14), then admonished them to "have no company with him." How can we "mark," "note," or "avoid" false teachers and leaders opposed to the truth when the ones who know their evil deeds are too cowardly to name them.

Some seem afraid to "lay it on the line." Perhaps, just perhaps, their fear may not be that error is being taught but that they, the critics, are rearranging the facts. We can hardly expect reliable documentation of "evidence" against another preacher, elder, or college administrator when the information is second or third hand.

Or maybe, just maybe, the "issue" has been conjured up in the bubbling brew of suspicion, jealousy or hatred. Brethren, enough of the issues. How about the facts. Give me some *facts* and scriptural testimony. Then I'll defend the truth and Christ's church with you until I die. The false teacher, the heretic and leader in apostasy need to be exposed — if, when, and where they exist. I *want* to know not what your opinion is, but what the truth is. *Your* integrity and honesty demand that you tell who, what, when, and where.

Enough of our papers, pulpits, and lectureships sounding like a flock of gossiping old hens at an afternoon tea, all afraid to be quoted and dodging a convicted stand.

A "Certain" Preacher
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