

“WE ARE DRIFTING!”

There is concerned outcry by many that we are being led by “change agents” to desert the “old paths.” Does that mean that we have hoisted anchor and are drifting with the wind and tide, or does it mean that we are no longer tethered to the positions held when you first came into the fellowship? Early in the last century, the pioneer preacher, J. D. Tant constantly warned, “We are drifting!” I joined with other preachers in pleading that we seek and return to the “old paths” commended by Jeremiah (6:16). The old paths to which Jeremiah pointed were set forth in the Penteteuch. We have “drifted” from the Law of Moses. Should we return to the “old paths?”

In the last 75 years I have witnessed lots of “drifting.” Change agents led from having only one assembly each week to having at least three which included Sunday evening and Wednesday evening. Now those change agents are deserting that old path by meeting in homes on one of those evenings. In the old paths of my youth, no “communion comments” were offered, all shared two glasses of grape juice, the communion was always after the sermon and invitation, and no prayer was offered for the collection. How we have drifted! These people without anchor have allowed an octet to lead congregational singing instead of one man doing it. They have allowed applauding to replace the “amen” of approval. They permit lifting up of hands in prayer instead of kneeling. Well, we were never very big on kneeling! Some are so callous as to omit the invitation song (which was an innovation of American revivalism).

Those who oppose change will say I have drifted from the truth but these practices and other issues we have created have little or nothing to do with truth.

Sad to state, those who should have gained wisdom by long experience are usually the ones who are the most pessimistic in denouncing all change as drifting from the old paths.

Not drifting! Purposeful change.