

UNDER THE OLD OAK TREE

(I Kings 13)

During the last twenty-five years the church of Jesus Christ has gone from what was called evangelical, to fundamentalists, to new evangelical, to progressive evangelical, to emergent. What used to distinguish fundamentalism from the rest was their separation stand.

GARBC (General Assoc. of Regular Baptists Churches) were very conservative and separated in the early 70's. By the early 90's they were participating with the ecumenical movement with groups like Promise Keepers, the Catholic church and charismatic organizations and with Pat Robertson's CBN.

ABWE (Association of Baptists For World Evangelism) in the 90's traded their separated stand for compromise yoking together with the likes of Wheaton College, United Bible Societies, Promise Keepers, and Campus Crusade.

BBFI (Baptist Bible Fellowship International) traded their separated stand also in the 90's when they refused warnings about Promise Keepers ecumenical teachings. Soon their conferences were being led by contemporary music teams, and some of their churches dropping their stand on Kings James only.

Highland Park Baptist Church (Home of Tenn. Temple U.) For over fifty years the home church of Lee Roberson and fundamental in their doctrine. By the time Roberson was gone from the scene, in the early 2000's the church was hosting Christian rock concerts in the main worship auditorium. In 2006 the church was back into the S.B.C. and hosted emerging church leader Dallas Willard as a lecturer. Mr. Willard believes and teaches the following: 1. It is possible to be saved without knowing Jesus Christ. 2. He rejects bible inspiration. 3. He rejects Christ's blood atonement. 4. He endorses contemporary mysticism. 5. He claims that God is not concerned about bible doctrinal purity. Here are some of the signs that have led these and other churches down the path of compromise.

1. **Ignoring the Warnings (II Tim. 4:1-5; Titus 2:15)** The attitudes today in churches is that it is okay to 'be privately critical' but do not be critical from the pulpit of other churches or pastors. However, if a preacher or church has a wider influence than just their local church and is being followed because of radio, t.v., books or meetings it is biblical to reproof and rebuke in order to let the truth be known about the false teachings or the wayward direction that is being taught.

2. **Follow the Crowd (Prov. 29:25; Gal. 2:12)** Our human nature tendency is to follow not lead. Unfortunately, as in the business world, so it is in the church world, most people are followers. The organization, the fellowship, the preaching circuit that "the good ol' boys" follow, the college where we graduated from all have an influence on us all. Most or all those churches

that have fallen have this in common, their standards and convictions were only as deep as the preacher, the college or the fellowship they were following. As soon as one compromised the others would not criticize and stand firm, they folded instead of standing on God's word. There is also a whole group of preachers and teachers that hold to the "keep it all positive" theory and do not teach or preach anything that is negative like sin, sins consequences, God's wrath, or hell.

3. Ignorance of Important Issues (Hosea 4:6; Heb. 3:13) A big reason why churches are falling is that preachers do not educate their people. Do the churches teach about Contemporary music, New Evangelicalism, Reformed theology, contemporary mysticism, or the emerging church? How about the churches having discipleship classes? Is it a mystery why people are shallow?

4. Easy Believism (Numbers 11:4) For the past twenty five years or so the churches began to be over filled with "a mixed multitude" because of this phenomenon. How many professions have the churches seen because of easy prayerism. "Just say this prayer", or we read them a few verses and then right into the sinners prayer and bingo, their miraculously saved. What about teaching them first about Jesus Christ, sin, repentance, the cross, the blood, etc. With each generation the churches get weaker. Unsaved church members do not have spiritual discernment and they do not know or love the truth of God's word nor will they support bible separation.