

Pastor's Pen

What is truth?

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. Jude 17-19

When Jesus was before Pilate, the following exchange occurred; *Jesus said, "For this reason I was born and have come into the World, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice."* "What is truth?" Pilate asked (John 18:38). As followers of Jesus Christ, we know there is absolute truth. To be perfectly blunt, that is what separates us from every other religion of the World. When Jesus said that, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6)". He let everyone know that there is only one way to heaven, only one truth, Jesus Christ is God incarnate.

However, since the first time Pilate asked what truth is, man has doubted the truth of God. Today we have so-called ministers of the Gospel that deny the truth of scripture. They belong to what is known as progressive Christianity. I want to share with you from Dr. Michael Kruger three areas where progressive Christianity distorts the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. Progressive Christianity Has a Low View of Christ-

One of the hallmarks of progressive Christianity is the way they view Jesus. The orthodox view of Jesus, of course, is that he's the divine Son of God and worthy of our worship and worthy of our adoration and to be praised as God. But, of course, that's not what progressive Christians believe. They believe that Jesus isn't so much the divine Son of God, but rather just a moral example for us to follow. Jesus is more of a big brother that sets a pattern that we walk in his footsteps. That's partly true, of course, we do follow Jesus's example, but progressive Christians make that the main thing. Jesus is just a picture of what we can be and what we can do and his main point is just to set an example for us. The lowering of Jesus is the first mark of progressive Christianity.

2. Progressive Christianity Is Focused on Moralism, Not Salvation

The highest goal of the Christian life for progressive Christianity is that you just have to be a good person. Tightly tied to that, as I've already suggested, is a second mark, which is this big focus on moralism. If you don't have any sort of sense of Jesus as someone to be worshiped, then he's just someone to be emulated, so the highest goal of the Christian life for progressive Christianity is that you just have to be a good person. You should just follow certain rules. You should be kind to your neighbor. You're not really left with the Gospel of salvation; you're left with a moral code, and it really reduces it to sort of this moralistic religion.

3. Progressive Christianity Downplays Our Fallenness

The third mark is tightly close to that, too, which is if you think you can be a good person, you must have a very low view of sin, which is another thing that progressive Christianity has. It's this idea that people aren't really that fallen and they're not really that bad, there's not really anything marring us, that we're all good people at the core and therefore really do have an opportunity to be even better. You'll find that in progressive Christian circles, there's a downplaying of the word sin; there's certainly no interest in talking about the wrath of God on sin. God is not portrayed as at all disturbed by or upset with sin. These are sort of the classic hallmarks of progressive Christianity. Now, when you wrap all that up, you're left with something that's not really Christianity at all at the end. If you don't have a divine Jesus and if you reduce it all to moralism and there's no real fall or sin then the cross isn't really anything that saves you. When you look at the cross, it's just a good example of a good person. It's not really good news. That's what's really sad about progressive Christianity. At the end of the day, it's really not good news at all. It's really that it's all up to you.

If it's all up to us, that's bad news. But of course, the real Gospel is good news that it's all done and completed in the great and finished work of Christ.

The following is a statement that came directly from Bethel Congregational United Church of Christ, a Progressive Christian Church.

In keeping with our "reformed and reforming" identity, we have embraced a movement that began in 2006 called Progressive Christianity. The movement was a part of a larger movement called "the emerging church." At the heart of these movements was the desire to articulate a way of being Christian that was an alternative to the Christian faith portrayed in the public realm. The leaders of Progressive Christianity had grown weary of defining their Christian faith in negative terms: "We aren't fundamentalists. We don't believe the Bible is the inerrant or infallible word of God. We don't agree that Creationism should replace the science of evolution in public schools. We don't believe that God hates gays. We don't believe that people of other faiths are going to hell unless they convert to Christianity. We don't deny the right of women to choose what happens to their bodies."

Progressive Christianity is not Christian. In John 6, Jesus's hard teaching causes a large number of his followers to abandon him. After they leave, Jesus asks his remaining disciples, "Do you want to go away as well?" (v. 67). What say you, Christian, will you stand firm in your faith. I close with Paul's instructions to the Ephesians;

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Eph. 4:11-16

Your shepherd,

Pastor Mark



Quote of the Week

"Nothing makes a man so virtuous as belief of the truth.
A lying doctrine will soon beget a lying practice.
A man cannot have an erroneous belief without by-and-by having an
erroneous life.
I believe the one thing naturally begets the other."
- C.H. Spurgeon

Weekly Gatherings



Bible Classes

New Testament
Sunday School
Sunday Morning @ 9AM



Weekday Meetings

Mondays | 7PM
Men's Bible Study



Family Groups

Thursdays @ 7PM @ Royall's
Every other Thursday @ 7PM
@ Patrick's & Cox's



Build the Body Teams

If you would like to serve on a BtB Team
and forgot to sign up, please contact the
team leader at the appropriate email
address.



Youth Study

Wednesdays @ 6:30PM
Youth Study



Service Times

Sunday Service 10:30AM
Children's Church @ 10:30AM

Giving from service on 07/04/2021

General Offering	4,943.00
Building Fund	1,468.00
Uganda	100.00
Total	\$6,511.20

Attendance	152
Sunday School	108
Online	21

Build the Body Ministries

Women's Ministry-women@ghbcva.org
AWANA-awana@ghbcva.org
Outreach Ministry-outreach@ghbcva.org
Worship Ministry-worship@ghbcva.org
Men's Ministry-men@ghbcva.org
Children's Ministry-children@ghbcva.org
Youth Ministry-youth@ghbcva.org
Prayer Team-prayer@ghbcva.org
Maintenance-maintenance@ghbcva.org
Fellowship-fellowship@ghbcva.org
Communications-communications@ghbcva.org
Front Line-frontline@ghbcva.org
Security-security@ghbcva.org



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