

PROGRESSIVE  
CHRISTIANITY

CAN LEAD  
YOU TO

HELL

A SPECIAL SELECTION FROM

**D**ECISION

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# THE ETERNAL PERIL

BY FRANKLIN GRAHAM

**F**or decades, a war has been raging against Biblical Christianity that goes under the seemingly innocent name of “progressive Christianity.”

It has cropped up in the halls of seminaries, infiltrated the pulpits of thousands of churches and been propagated by a godless liberal media. It is bent on casting doubt

and undermining the foundational principles of God’s Word.

Many of the Apostle Paul’s letters were written to churches that were experiencing serious doctrinal errors. One of his sternest was penned to the church in Galatia, which is part of modern-day Turkey. In it, he launched into a stern rebuke for the teaching that had polluted the Galatian church:

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!” (Galatians 1:6-9, NIV).



In the case of the Galatians, Paul was specifically addressing their attempt to return to the demands of the law rather than continuing to live by grace through faith in the sacrificial, atoning work of the cross of Jesus Christ. Such an attempt wasn't just a really bad idea; it actually would result in living under God's curse, not His favor.

I would say the exact same warning applies today to the advocates of progressive Christianity. They deceitfully promote and proclaim what I believe is clearly a "different gospel, which is really no Gospel at all."

Let me say that again—progressive Christianity is not a Gospel at all. It has nothing to do with the Gospel of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It results in nothing but spiritual confusion and chaos.

Here's the problem.

Progressive Christianity denies the divinely inspired, authoritative truth of the Bible as it intersects every facet of living. For example, although Scripture clearly says that marriage is between one man and one woman, proponents of progressive Christianity twist and distort the truth of God's Word on sexuality, focusing on such nonsensical trends as gender identity. They deny God's distinction of the sexes, and instead invent their own misguided standards, unguided by the Word of God. The degrading cultural influences that embrace such movements as gay marriage have more sway on their beliefs than the Bible does.

When the topic of justice is discussed, progressive Christianity is primarily concerned with the issues of social and racial justice (which the Bible does address), but most often neglects the far more fundamental issue of *God's* justice—how a holy and just God deals with sinful and wicked men.

And when it comes to the matter of personal sin, progressive Christianity most frequently fails to see the ruinous consequences of mankind's depraved, sinful state. Biblical teaching on the precious blood of Christ, the sacrificial, substitutionary, atoning work of

Christ's death on the cross, is too often neglected or distorted.

So the real, ultimate danger is that progressive Christianity can send a person to hell.

I know that sounds harsh, but it's true.

To reject the deity of Christ is to deny Christ and doom yourself to an eternity spent in hell.

To love darkness more than light will end in an eternity in hell.

To hope that good works alone will earn salvation, while rejecting the gift of everlasting life through faith in Christ alone, will lead straight into the eternal abyss.

To deny the fullness of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son

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and God the Holy Spirit—can risk a person spending their eternity separated from the glory and splendor of God Almighty.

Do you see how anything other than orthodox, Biblical Christianity can be so dangerous and deadly? That’s why the Apostle Paul called down a curse on those who preach a different gospel than the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here’s how Paul precisely defined the Gospel:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all

that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4, NKJV).

This is the only saving Gospel. Preachers must faithfully proclaim it from the pulpit if they want their congregants to be convicted of their sin and to trust solely in the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. Praise and worship have their place in the church, but there is no substitute for pastors preaching the power of the cross and the resurrection.

Pastors today must “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry” (2 Timothy 4:2-5, NKJV).

There’s certainly nothing very forward thinking about progressive Christianity. It actually regresses into unbiblical thinking and living, and it will put a person’s very soul in eternal jeopardy.

Evangelicals need to guard the truth of genuine Scriptural preaching and living, remaining true and bold about exactly what the Bible clearly teaches. There is no other way to be saved and secured for all eternity. ■ ©2022 BGEA

The Scripture quotation marked NIV is taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version. Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from The Holy Bible, New King James Version.

# FIVE WAYS TO COUNTER

BY ALISA CHILDERS

**N**ear the end of His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:15-16). And after Jesus’ resurrection and ascension, Christianity had barely gotten off the ground before false teachings began to infiltrate the church.



In fact, much of the New Testament is dedicated to alerting Christians to the dangers of various deceptions and instilling a sense of urgency to stand strong against them. Paul opposed Peter to his face when Peter became intimidated by the “circumcision party” in Galatians 2:11-13. Early versions of Gnosticism were making inroads by the time John penned his first epistle. From Marcion to Arius to modern prosperity preachers, there has been no end of false prophets who walk like sheep and talk like sheep, but inwardly they only want to feast on sheep. One current false gospel is a movement called “progressive Christianity.”

Finding its roots in the emergent church movement of the late 1990s and early 2000s, progressive Christianity has grown into a movement that has infiltrated the evangelical church. It is marked by a willingness to redefine, reexamine and ultimately reject core historic

doctrines of the Christian faith. In addition to a nearly universal denial of original sin, the substitutionary atonement of Jesus and the existence of hell, progressive Christianity also aligns with current cultural norms regarding same-sex marriage and abortion. And it is defined by a strong push to embrace a gospel that centers around universal salvation and social justice rather than personal salvation, sin and redemption.

Individual Christians, parachurch organizations and churches that tend to drift into progressive Christianity do so in slow, subtle, almost indiscernible shifts. But progressive Christianity can only grow if it remains unchallenged. Progressive Christianity imitates culture, but

**“There has been no end of false prophets  
who walk like sheep and talk like sheep,  
but inwardly they only want to feast on sheep.”**

Christians should imitate Jesus by recognizing and making a strong stand against the false teachings of this growing movement. Here are five ways to do just that:



### **UPHOLD BIBLICAL AUTHORITY**

One of the hallmarks of progressive Christianity is a lowered view of the Bible. Progressives view Scripture not as perfectly and divinely

inspired but as a primarily human book that contains contradictions, errors and inconsistent theology. Because of this, Biblical authority takes a back seat to one's personal conscience as the highest authority for truth.

As followers of Jesus, we must align our view with what He taught about the Bible.

Jesus referred to the Old Testament Scriptures as the Word of God (Mark 7:13). He taught that the Scriptures were inspired by God, saying in Matthew 22:41-45 that David was speaking “by the Spirit” in Psalm 110:1. And when the devil tempted Him in the wilderness, He appealed to the authority of the Scriptures by declaring, “It is written” (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). Jesus continually referred to Old Testament events as real history. He said, “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35), and He proclaimed that it would be “easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void” (Luke 16:17). He plainly told the Sadducees that they were in error “because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God” (Matthew 22:29).

To stand strong against progressive Christianity, let's unapologetically hold to Jesus' teaching about what the Bible is—the accurate, authoritative and inspired (literally “God-breathed”) Word of God.



## **STAND FOR BIBLICAL SEXUALITY AND THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE**

Much of the world's confusion surrounding issues of sexuality and the sanctity of human life have to do with a cultural mandate for sexual freedom. In progressive Christianity, there is a strong push for same-sex marriage, but it doesn't stop there. In many progressive circles, the entire Christian ethic of sex being enjoyed only within the bounds of marriage between one man and one woman



is considered outdated and even harmful. Advocacy for abortion rights is becoming more normalized.

As followers of Jesus, we must align our view with what Jesus taught about sexuality and the sanctity of life.

When asked a question about divorce in Matthew 19:3-9, Jesus affirmed God's definition for marriage found in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." In Matthew 15:19-20, Jesus categorizes sexual immorality as something that defiles a person. And according to the Scriptures that Jesus affirmed, sexual immorality meant any sexual activity outside of the confines of marriage. In Matthew 5:21-22, Jesus reiterates and strengthens the Biblical command, "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). Because of this, early Christians stood against abortion and infanticide in their day.

To stand strong against progressive Christianity, let's unapologetically obey Jesus' teaching that sex was designed to be enjoyed within the confines of Biblical marriage and that human life is sacred.



### **GET A BACKBONE**

When I was growing up as a Christian kid in the '80s and '90s, the world might have looked at me as someone who was a bit old-fashioned, or a "goodie two-shoes," for my views about morality and the Gospel. Today, young people are facing similar criticisms from progressive Christians, but with the added weight of being called a "bigot" or "hateful" or "intolerant." Some even go so far as to claim that anyone who holds to a historic Biblical sexual ethic is an unsafe and harmful person. The pressure to capitulate is unbelievably strong.

As followers of Jesus, we must align our view with what Jesus

taught about holding unpopular beliefs.

In John 15:18, Jesus said, “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.” Jesus also instructed His followers to expect tribulation in this life but tells us to take heart because He has overcome the world (John 16:33). In Matthew 5:10, Jesus encourages: “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

To stand strong against progressive Christianity, let’s unapologetically hold to Jesus’ teaching that even though it may be countercultural and may bring persecution, obeying Him is worth the cost.

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but Christians should imitate Jesus by  
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the false teachings of this growing movement.”**



#### **LIVE THE TRUTH**

Progressive Christianity is marked by a “what’s true for you is true for you” attitude. The idea is that even if objective truth exists, it can’t really be known. Mantras like “live your truth” and “find your authentic self” saturate everything from the media we consume to the products we buy.

But we don't have the option to live our truth because "our truth" doesn't actually exist. That's not how truth works. A true statement or belief is one that corresponds with reality, and truth is true whether someone believes it or not.

As followers of Jesus, we must align our view with what Jesus taught about truth.

In John 14:6, Jesus claimed to actually *be* the truth. After His arrest, He told Pilate: "Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice" (John 18:37). And rather than "find yourself," Jesus said you must "deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow me" (Cf. Matthew 16:24). Jesus prayed that His disciples would be sanctified in the truth and then He identified God's Word as "truth" (John 17:17).

To stand strong against progressive Christianity, let's unapologetically hold to Jesus' teaching that truth exists, it can be known, and it actually brings about our sanctification.



## **PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL**

In our culture, it's considered arrogant to claim to know truth—especially when it comes to religion and morality. Progressive Christianity is no different. Priding itself on being "inclusive," and coupled with its rejection of absolute truth, the message of theological progressives will ebb and flow with cultural norms. This means avoiding any uncomfortable parts of the Gospel, like final judgment and a place of punishment called hell.

As followers of Jesus, we must align our view with what Jesus taught about the Gospel.

When Jesus began His ministry, He declared, "Repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). What is this Gospel Jesus spoke of? In

John 3:16, Jesus famously said, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” Jesus went on to say in verse 18, “But whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” In one of His parables, He described the Day of Judgment, when He will divide people into two groups, one on His right and the other on His left. He will welcome the group on His right into eternal life, and to those on His left He will say, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41).

To stand strong against progressive Christianity, let’s unapologetically hold to Jesus’ teaching that the Gospel is the Good News of eternal life for those who believe, but for those who reject God’s free gift, there is judgment.

In 2 Corinthians 2:14, the Apostle Paul describes spreading the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ. He compares it to a sweet perfume but said that to those who are perishing, it smells like death. Our job is to spread the fragrance and leave the outcome to the Lord. We have a Biblical obligation to stand against any message that runs contrary to the Gospel.

We must stand strong against the false gospel of progressive Christianity because Jesus is worth following, and the beauty of the Christian worldview, anchored in Holy Scripture, is worth protecting. ■ ©2022 ALISA CHILDERS

Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version.

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# SUBVERSION OF MORALITY

BY ALBERT MOHLER JR.

**W**hy do moral progressivism and theological liberalism go hand in hand? The quick answer is that both impulses are rooted in an attempt to escape or undermine Scripture. The long answer is more complicated—but really interesting.

Theological liberalism emerged and gained momentum in the 19th century. Theologians such as Friedrich Schleiermacher in Germany began to call for a reformulation of Christian doctrine that would replace orthodox Christianity with a more modern version of the faith. Schleiermacher wanted to shift the main theological emphasis from the objective truth of God's Word to a subjective Christian experience. The authority of the Bible was undermined.

But, interestingly enough, those early liberal theologians did not seek to reject a morality based in the Bible and the Christian tradition. To the contrary, they sought to “rescue” Christian morality from Christian doctrine. Save the morality, ditch the doctrine.

These same currents came to the United States and exploded on the church scene in the early 20th century. Liberals such as Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor of New York's famous Riverside Church, denied doctrines like the virgin birth, but they would never have argued for normalizing adultery, not to mention homosexuality. They



argued that to maintain Christian morality, the church had to discard “outdated” doctrines clearly taught in Scripture.

One of the great conservative theologians of the era, J. Gresham Machen, argued that the liberals had not “updated” Christianity, they had repudiated Christianity and invented an entirely new religion. In Machen’s words, their new religion was “not Christianity at all, but a religion which is so different from Christianity as to belong in a different category.”

Machen was right. The liberals had just followed the secular intellectual currents and replaced Christianity with a new religion, which they claimed to be modernized or liberalized. Secular intellectuals

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set the pace, and the liberal theologians followed.

But, remember, they wanted to maintain Christian morality after denying Christian doctrine. Predictably, that did not last long.

By the 1960s, a sexual revolution was in full swing, and leading figures in the liberal world were denying any objective morality based in the Bible. They were building an intellectual foundation for the liberal churches and denominations to abandon Biblical morality (especially on matters of sexual behavior) and redefine Christianity to match the revolutionary spirit of the age.

One by one, major churches and denominations joined the sexual

revolution and reformulated their teachings on divorce, birth control, premarital sex, adultery and homosexuality. These churches had destroyed any objective foundation for believing there are any consensual sexual behaviors that are inherently wrong. They did not resist



the sexual revolution, they joined it.

Don't miss what had really happened. Once you accept a "progressive" understanding of Christian *doctrine*, you will eventually have a progressive understanding of Christian *morality*. It was beyond

foolish for the early theological liberals to believe that they could undercut Christian doctrine, deny the inspiration and authority of the Bible, and still maintain Christian morality. Somehow, they had convinced themselves that they could torpedo their own ship and keep sailing.

The central point is that you cannot maintain Biblical morality if you have subverted Biblical authority. The early Protestant liberals believed that the larger secular society would hold fast to traditional sexual morality. It was a foolish mistake. The secular world just added momentum to the sexual revolutions. The new sexual morality celebrated (or justified) sex before marriage, adultery, pornography

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and other forms of heterosexual misbehavior.

When the gay rights revolution emerged, every major Christian denomination believed and taught that same-sex relationships and behaviors were wrong, sinful and to be condemned. But by the end of the 20th century, the movement to normalize same-sex relationships had expanded to include everything within the category of LGBTQ+. And don't miss the plus sign. There will be more to come.

When you abandon Biblical doctrine, you set the stage to deny Biblical morality. At the same time, the larger society demands acceptance of its new “progressive” morality, issue by issue.



That brings us to those who describe themselves as today's "progressive Christians." The best way to understand this movement is to see it as the latest form of theological liberalism. It comes with the same arguments, like the assertion that Christianity needs to be updated and must get over a bad reputation for being "negative" on matters of sexual morality. More recently, this movement has been arguing for accepting at least some of the claims made by transgender activists. The movement will not stop there.

The waves of "progressive" movements demanding a reformulation of doctrine and morality in the name of the modern age come with predictable frequency now. The secular society grows only more demanding, and those who try to "update" Christianity have to keep moving the moral mileposts. I am now old enough to have seen wave after wave of "progressive" energy wash up on the evangelical shore.

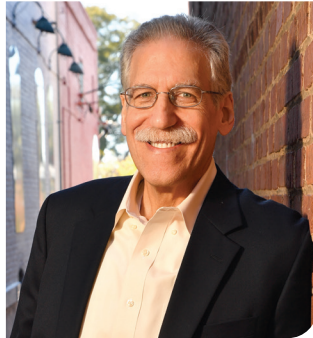
The society around us will demand more and more compromise, and the moral revolutionaries will see the Christian church, bound to Scripture and committed to the Gospel, as the great obstacle to their version of moral progress. And, once you untether yourself or your church from the Word of God, you had better expect the next wave of "progressive" energy to wash you and your church far out to sea. ■ ©2022 R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.

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# THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE

BY MICHAEL BROWN

**M**any of us are familiar with with Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 10 where he stated that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (2 Corinthians 10:4, KJV). But are we also familiar with what Paul wrote next? Do we know what kind of strongholds we pull down through these mighty spiritual weapons?



Paul continued, "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete" (2 Corinthians 10:5-6, ESV).

As paraphrased in The Message, "We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity."

This is not just a matter of driving demons from people bound and possessed (although that can be part of our spiritual warfare too). It is a matter of driving out demonic mindsets and false assumptions,

of expelling darkness with light and deception with truth.

Our battle is both spiritual and intellectual as we engage in spiritual warfare with demons and their ideologies.

That's why Paul wrote, "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons" (1 Timothy 4:1, NIV). It is not only the temptation of sin that pulls people away from God; it is also the deception of error.

That's why Paul warned the Corinthians, saying, "I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily

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enough" (2 Corinthians 11:3-4, NIV).

His greatest concern, then, was not that they would completely deny Jesus but that they would believe in a different Jesus. He was not only concerned with their moral integrity; he was also concerned with their doctrinal purity.

Paul understood that Satan himself was involved directly in the manufacture and propagation of false doctrines. The ancient serpent deceived Eve by planting a question in her mind about the words of God, and he uses the same tactic again and again. There really is nothing new under the sun.

What, exactly, was the nature of Satan's lie to Eve? His opening words said it all: "*Has God really said ... ?*"

To paraphrase, "Eve, can you really trust His words? Does He really



Chaplains Dan Reardon and Kyle Fauntleroy work together to put up the cross for the Easter Sunrise Service on the flight deck of USS Nimitz.

mean what He says? He is lying to you! He said you will die if you eat from this tree, but you most certainly will not die. That means that your first step to enlightenment is to recognize that this God is not who He seems to be and that His intentions are questionable. I know better!” (Genesis 3:1-5).

This is the spirit of progressive Christianity—the mindset that we know better than God, that the plain sense of the words of the Bible cannot be trusted, that the old, proven paths are not proven at all, that the very God of the Bible must be recreated if He is to live up to our enlightened standards. We know better!

What we are left with is simply *our* religion—a faith and a bible and

a god that we have created in our image, based on our values.

Augustine summed it up nicely: “If you believe what you like in the Gospel, and reject what you don’t like, it is not the Gospel you believe, but yourself.”

But, again, this is not merely an intellectual battle. At root, this is a spiritual battle, one that can only be won through prayer and fasting, through clear Gospel proclamation, through resisting the enemy, refusing to compromise and walking in genuine, heartfelt love.

The spirit of the age will be against us (“You are so old-fashioned and outdated!”). The spirit of the flesh will be against us (“You are such boring legalists!”). The spirit of that ancient serpent will be against us (“If you want to be on the right side of history, you need to abandon your inflexible, fundamentalist mindset!”).

But the Holy Spirit is *with* us, and by His power we pull down these deceptive strongholds and demolish these destructive ideologies. We do it by wrestling in prayer in the secret place before we raise our voices in the public square.

We do it by pointing to the inevitable trajectory of progressive beliefs, as little by little, they depart further and further from the faith until even the most fundamental doctrines are denied.

We do it by exposing the moral bankruptcy of a faith that questions God’s integrity and His Word, producing bondage rather than freedom.

And we do it by setting the captives free, offering them radically new life through the Gospel and a true encounter with the living God through His Son, Jesus.

In the days ahead, this battle will intensify. The foundations of our faith will be questioned as never before, and the “old ways” will be rapidly abandoned. But be encouraged. Progressive religion is no better than a beautiful sandcastle, soon to be washed out when the tide comes in.

It is that holy tide, in the life and power of the Spirit, grounded in the Word of truth, that will carry us to victory and deliver many from deception and lies. ■ ©2022 MICHAEL BROWN

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# MAKING THE DOOR WIDER

BY ERWIN LUTZER

**T**he disciples asked Jesus a question that many of us have wondered about: “Lord, will those who are saved be few?” (Luke 13:23). We’ve all wondered how many people will be saved and how many lost. We know that in the end there will be a multitude of the redeemed from every tribe and nation that no one can number (Revelation 7:9). But we also know that this multitude represents only a fraction of the human race. We would like to know more specific numbers and perhaps percentages.



Jesus did not answer this question directly, rather He chose to give a warning:

“Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you have come from’” (Luke 13:24-25). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that more people will be on the broad road that leads to destruction, rather than the narrow road which leads to life. Clearly, there will be more people lost than saved.

Yet today there are many “progressive” Christians who want to

make the narrow door wider; they advance their cause under the banner of love and justice and equality. Progressive Christianity has the same basic worldview as the theological liberalism that shifted authority away from the Scripture to human opinions. Progressive Christians do not reject Biblical authority outright; rather they purport to walk a middle path with the Bible in one hand and cultural sensitivity in the other.

To put it clearly: Progressive Christianity interprets the Bible through the lens of culture; it does not critique the culture through the lens of the Bible. So, in the name of love and inclusivity, progressive Christians apply their teaching to matters of sexuality, the

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doctrine of salvation and the eternal destiny of lost sinners. They wish to make Christianity blend in with the culture rather than stand against it. They believe that in this way, the church will become more relevant and loving. “Can’t we just abandon some of the hard edges of Christianity and move toward a more inclusive understanding of the Christian faith?” This, they say, will remove barriers for those who see the church as unloving and hopelessly exclusive.

Yes, I agree we should be loving, but we must also have a deep commitment to truth. The Bible makes it clear that loving God and

loving our neighbor summarizes the law. But when we replace God's view of love with our own view of what we think love requires, it can lead us to justify sinful behavior.

Jesus clarified the meaning of love: "If you love me, you will



keep my commandments" (John 14:15). To love God is to obey His Word. In contrast, progressive Christianity surrenders to the moral revolution, the essential goodness of human nature, and an inclusiveness regarding essential doctrines. In other words, they



have developed a worldview based on human desires, not the clear revelation of God. This is exactly what Paul warned against: “The time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves *teachers to suit their own passions*, and will turn away from listening to the truth” (2 Timothy 4:3-4, italics added).

Second, with a verbal sleight of hand, progressive Christians sell their point of view using words such as *equality* and *justice*. The Bible is very clear that every Christian should be involved in pursuing justice. So the phrase *social justice* sounds Biblical, but when you peel back the label, too often you find that it has a wide

**“Ask yourself, ‘Do I believe this because it sounds compassionate, or is it actually Biblical?’  
The most compassionate thing we can do is  
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range of leftist agendas. There is “marriage justice” (same-sex marriage). There is economic justice (socialism). There is racial justice (critical race theory, which divides the races rather than unifying them as the Gospel demands). So behind the phrase *social justice* is often an entire worldview that is contrary to Biblical teaching.

So, what are we to do?

First, we must pray for discernment. We must look beyond the labels and say, “This might look good, but is it hiding an unbiblical view of love?” Ask yourself, “Do I believe this because it sounds

compassionate, or is it actually Biblical?" The most compassionate thing we can do is to tell people the truth.

Second, ask if the world's definitions of *justice* and *equality* are based on divine law, or my own preference. In the Book of Judges, "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). They did not do what was *wrong* in their own eyes; they did what was *right* and *just* in their own eyes. But this ended in idolatry.

In Proverbs we read, "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding" (Proverbs 23:23). And in our era, refusing to sell the truth is more important than ever.

"Enter through the narrow door," Jesus warned. We have no right to make it wider. ■ ©2022 ERWIN W. LUTZER

Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version.

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