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The Arminian “Gospel” Effect  
On Today’s Church

Tracing the divergent movement through church history, we can see its progressive (more accurately, retrogressive) development—especially since the reformation era.

The original church at Jerusalem was a model of faithfulness, which should have been the example followed by every church since. A careful reading of Acts 2:41-47, and 4:32-37 will attest to the complete unity, or mutual solidarity of the assembly. Which, obviously, means that they were of “one mind”, and “one heart” doctrinally, and in every responsibility to God, and each other.

As noted in the commentary on George Zeller’s article “For Whom Did Christ Die?”, and as you may know, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century, the British monk Pelagius dissented against the church tradition of the literal Biblical gospel, and taught that divine grace, and human faith were both required for one to become a Christian. Even though in 529, the Synod of Orange refuted those teachings, the movement obviously continued

With irreverent defiance of the apostles’ tradition (the literal gospel truth established by God, and believed by the original and early churches), he and his followers thereby denied the sovereignty of God’s will, declaring it to be subject to man’s will, in the matter of human salvation.

Jacobus Arminius, as related on page 5 of my commentary, was the next major defector from the orthodox gospel interpretation, and has the dubious distinction of being the leader of the free will movement, which is the prevailing belief system of nearly the entire universal church, today.

How could millions of Christians fall into the devil’s trap of believing a perverted form of the gospel? It being his (Satan’s) major coup since the original sin of Adam and Eve. But, while he is a tempter and influencer, he is not the cause of the two great human failures, or tragedies. Adam, for the commission of original sin, and his guilty descendants who have betrayed gospel truth, are fully responsible for their respective acts of disobedience to God.

Just think of the terrible destructive effect on time and eternity, that man has had (in Adam) by not obeying the clearly spoken ultimatum of God, who had given him such great personal responsibility. Immortality, and almost unlimited temporal life abilities, and privileges would have been realized, instead of the terrible eternal consequences, and restricted earthly life resulting from his disobedience.

The first transgression brought mankind under the law of sin and death, and the second great disobedience to His word, corrupted the integrity of most of the church established by God.

As for the church’s deplorable status quo (which Arminians hardly suspect, in their delusion),

there is an analogy that I believe is applicable, in principle..That is, the comparison of the Lord's army of spiritual soldiers, and a military corps, or army.

The troops of a regular army are subject to the orders of the commanding officer, and military rules and regulations. If a large number of them rebelled, and refused or failed to obey their orders, it would be a revolt, even mutiny. And, of course, there would be serious punishment enforced.

Why is not organized resistance of Christians, who do not obey the orders of their commanding officer, God, and His word, or code of conduct—be similarly guilty of revolt or mutiny against Him, and His gospel truth, which they are commanded to learn and loyally maintain, but have betrayed?

And while the consequences of such disloyalty may not be carried out on earth, as deserved, they will surely be administered at the judgment seat of Christ, as censure, shame, or loss of rewards for their unfaithfulness, or betrayal of entrusted responsibility and duty!

Why most of them never come to the truth on the subject controversy involved, is saddening, and difficult to comprehend. Particularly, when the scriptures emphasize the importance of sound doctrine, and is fully and clearly taught in the Bible (when properly studied), and that also cautions against false teaching of any kind.

Some of it relates to a lack of reverential fear of offending, or not pleasing God. If we are motivated by the degree of commitment to God that He deserves of us, wouldn't that ensure our faithfulness to Him? We may not assume, though, that that kind of submission is a once and for all act—but must be continually reaffirmed and practiced.

Then, there is the danger of leaving the light of the truth, and wandering off into spiritual darkness, and thereby making oneself susceptible to error, and unwittingly playing into the devil's hands.

Why else would so many misguided believers not diligently test what they believe against the scriptures that deal with the subject, and see what they have misinterpreted, neglected, or ignored? By which process, I mean the unbiased, objective kind of study that is scripturally required.

Or, why don't they listen to, and heed reformative teaching, or warnings, and admonitions? Something is sadly missing, that keeps most of Christianity from knowing and testifying to the true gospel, which omission or failure breaks or interferes with fellowship with God, and surely leads to much other unfaithfulness

The adversarial relationship between the two sides of this doctrinal conflict, continues no matter who says what! Even though, in addition to scripture itself, there has been an immeasurable volume of conforming truth presented by Calvinists, there has been little, if any, yielding, or

concession from the Arminian faction. I must also emphasize the “flesh against Spirit” war that the Bible teaches us about. Simply put, error is born of the flesh, the old nature of man, and truth is born of the Spirit, the new nature of man.

I am speaking mainly about established doctrinal truth, or error. If there are two different doctrinal interpretations of the same subject, and allowing that one is true, it was produced by the Spirit of God. The other belief, which cannot also be the truth, is a product of the natural, carnal mind of man. It is a common trait of man to believe what he wants to believe, and if a Christian walks in the flesh instead of the Spirit (at least when he is considering the doctrinal question at issue) he will probably not change his position. And, as long as that life principle is allowed to prevail, the spiritual quality of the church’s life will be correspondingly diminished.

The church has come so far away from the early church practice, that it can’t, or won’t openly and objectively deal with doctrinal disagreements. In the original church, and certainly others in the early years, the members met together regularly, and as necessary, to meet their responsibility to maintain unity and solidarity. They worked conscientiously, and diligently to “keep the faith”, as instituted by the apostles.

They “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine”, which is primarily the gospel, and all of its ramifications. Meaning, first of all, they were grounded in fundamental true knowledge of the gospel, and other doctrine, or principles by which they were to conduct their lives.

And, by implication, if something came up like our controversial problem, they would deal with it without delay until the issue was resolved. Never, would such a rift, or schism go on from there, like it has proliferated in the ensuing church history.

There is probably comparatively little devotion to God, and His word today, like there was in the model, original church. No circumstantial explanation, or excuses will ever justify any degree of the modern church’s degeneration from the first church’s record of total faithfulness—which was not perfection, due to our old nature nemesis, but knowing, and being committed to everything God required of them..

Rare, must be the churches and individuals today, who have the testimony of being on the right side of everything God has instituted for them to comply with. It is especially difficult to see why so many Christians let themselves be deceived about the foundational doctrine of their spiritual lives. When, surely, God has made His word understandable, and one can know with certainty when he is right, or wrong for that matter. What else does “the spirit of truth and error” mean. It has to be a real discerning ability we have, and if it doesn’t work, the fault is ours—like every other failing we may have.

God directs us to prove His word to be true. He doesn’t need the verification, but we do! Obviously, most Christians haven’t done that, or the church wouldn’t be in the sorry state that it is

today. And, after such a long period of decline, there is little hope for much reformation, as attested to by church prophecy. Yet, we have the admonition that some may respond to, which is: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

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