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Decline of the Christian Church
Its History of Gospel Corruption

1. The First Church (in Jerusalem): **The model church**. Acts 2:42-47. The standard which all churches should have strived to emulate. The literal gospel teaching of the believers in the first and other early churches was established by the apostles, having received it directly from the Lord! Hence, there would be no misinterpretations, or doctrinal errors!

2. Infiltration of the "leaven" of false gospel teaching into the church, in the third and fourth century by Pelagius, a British monk and theologian. He taught that man has a free will, and must act in cooperation with God, that is, assent to the gospel, to be converted to a Christian, thus, Pelagius denied the necessity of **independent divine grace** for justification and salvation!

The controversy that has developed over the many centuries of church history, has been labeled Calvinism (for the **literal scriptural gospel**) vs. Arminianism (for the **liberalized unscriptural gospel**). Falsely secure with a large majority consensus, the latter group by their intransigence would, it appears, rather live with a lie than confront the truth and escape their self-inflicted bondage to Satan, the father of lies!

3. Proliferation of false gospel doctrine, until and beyond the Reformation period, which caused a temporary resurgence of the literal gospel interpretation. The predominance of conventional false doctrine, repeated and reinforced for some two thousand years is a formidable force to encounter, even in the face of the incontrovertible truth of the literal scriptural gospel!

An applicable quote, I heard from a guest pastor was that, "Error gets plenty of publicity, but truth gets a hard time". This would seem to be especially true if the error would be more favorable to people, and the truth harder to agree with, or accept! Which poor choice, however, would be due to **fleshly thinking, not**

spiritual!

4. Cause of perpetuation of the false gospel concept:

A. Doctrinally errant believers, especially pastors, teachers, missionaries--who themselves had capitulated to the liberalized, corrupt interpretation, failed to (1) teach new believers the whole gospel truth, and (2) advise them to always test their beliefs by their own scriptural study! Acts 17:11.

Note: Elementary to the latter personal responsibility, is the teaching of the discipline of "walking (thinking and acting) in the Spirit" (the Christians "new" nature), instead of the negative, normal habit of "walking in the flesh (the "old" nature)!

This means that a believer, not having learned the true gospel, or how to come to that truth himself, stays locked into the old nature mode of thinking, and does not have spiritual discernment to know the difference! Therefore, that doctrinal error will characterize his walk all his life, unless and until he takes unrelenting, spiritual steps to prove whether his gospel and other beliefs are scripturally correct!

God does not condone different opinions of his teaching. His meanings are exact, and required to be at least fundamentally learned by every believer, because God requires believers to be united in their knowledge of his word! He is not the author of confusion, man is, especially when he is not spiritually committed to "rightly divide (discern, or distinguish) the word of truth."

The non-Christian world has adopted various religious philosophies as their belief systems, but no other religion assumed to be credible, has acceptance with God, because believers of such are not endowed with his spirit, which is the essential life principle of actual believers, who are members of the universal church of Jesus Christ ("ecclesia", the called out ones)!

While I believe that most Christians would not deny the Lord personally, yet most Christians have denied Him doctrinally, by not believing the true gospel! There has to be a logical, and seriously important but inexcusable reason for this;

and also why the problem is usually not overcome.

A fundamental literal gospel principle is, that salvation is the result of "irresistible grace". That is, predestination to redemption is guaranteed for those God has elected to save. But doctrinal truth, even for believers, is "resistible grace", so that Christians have to guard against a world of false teachers and religions, even their own possible misinterpretations.

A factor affecting decisions that a Christian makes, relates to the fact that two different natures exist in him. As previously alluded to, one nature is the "flesh" or carnal nature, and the other competing nature is "spiritual". Simply put, one is natural, and the other is spiritual. The old nature operates almost automatically, as it does in unregenerated people, but the new spiritual nature only works when a Christian gives place to it, or consciously submits to the Lord's leading. It is **a discipline that must be learned, and continually practiced**, until it becomes more of a "second nature", which it literally is!

The fact that there are two contrasting gospel beliefs (one being false), is because one interpretation is spiritually learned, with conviction, and the other is a product of the flesh, or natural intellect of man. If Christians are spiritually committed to know the truth of a doctrine, or any scriptural matter, they will come to the right conclusion and belief, if they persist in it, in the Spirit, and not the flesh!

Because the Spirit of God is the same in all believers, and when consulted, or allowed to have the ascendancy in a believer's life, he will not have a different understanding of a scriptural subject or principle. That is, a Christian cannot be wrong in his spiritual interpretation! The **inherent, spiritual, new nature** of a Christian is predisposed to seek and learn the truth--and if allowed to prevail, **cannot misinterpret biblical truths** that God has established for a Christian to know!

Of the two great tests of man that God established, think of the scope, or the temporal, and eternal effect on mankind, and the church of (1) the failure of Adam and Eve to heed the warning of God not to eat of "the tree of knowledge of good

and evil", and (2) the consequences of most Christians capitulating to the devil, by believing a corrupt concept of the gospel, rendering themselves, and the church unfaithful, and unspiritual, because of a state of serious gospel doctrine error, of which most Christians never repent, or are reformed.

Just as Adam followed the leading of Satan, instead of God, and plunged the human race into eternal condemnation, except for a certain ordained number to be saved, so too, has nearly every Christian followed the devil by listening to and heeding his false teaching--in this case, of the gospel. Even though, as it says in Rom. 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death". The eternal aspect of which is certain, and unconditional, with the temporal factor being conditioned by being faithful to the Lord in our earthly life!

The average Christian today, lives in a dilemma of his own making. **He is religious, but not spiritual!** He has a spiritual nature, which is dormant, because he doesn't engage it. His life is a paradox! He cannot conduct himself spiritually, because he has a serious doctrinal wrong belief, which alienates him from God; and he cannot believe (understand) the true gospel because he does not "walk" or think and act,"in the Spirit".

Not believing the true gospel is "quenching" the Spirit of knowledge (1 Thess. 5:19), which interferes with "walking in the Spirit" (thinking and acting spiritually). Scriptural knowledge is spoken of as "light". False doctrinal belief is the opposite, or "darkness"--resulting in **unfaithfulness, not only to the word, but to the Lord, himself!**

I am reluctant to use myself as an example of the solution to that seemingly hopeless problem of the enigma noted. There are two reasons--one requiring more of an act of faithfulness than the other, which of course, should motivate our actions. As I have previously written, for the first ten years of my Christian life, I believed the same wrong gospel interpretation, that most of the universal church does.

The thing that led me to eventually see the error in my gospel principles, was

something a fellow church member said to me, just matter-of-factly, because I doubt if she had much doctrinal knowledge of the subject. She said, simply, that **we are saved because we are predestinated!**

I knew that the bible said that as a fact, and I didn't argue the matter with her, but I thought that man has a "free will", and that has to be accounted for somewhere in the "equation". So, I set out to prove that man could not be "forced" to believe, but has a choice to either accept or reject the "offer" of salvation. In that sentence, alone, there turned out to be some incorrect theological thought, or opinion!

First, it is true that God does not make man believe the gospel. Not only that, but as 1 Cor. 2:11-14 reveals, natural man cannot discern spiritual things (including the gospel), and neither is he required to. Nor, is salvation an "offer" to man. The truth is, that those who are elected to be saved, are first made a "new creation", with a spiritual nature able to believe the gospel, and all other scriptural truth. Their conversion to Christians, is wholly a direct, independent act of God's grace, requiring no cooperative act of man to consummate it, including not requiring belief of the gospel in order to become a Christian.

In my case, here is the difficult, if not impossible question to answer, with singular certainty. Did I voluntarily seek the truth about salvation, that I didn't know before? Or, being like the multitudes of Christians who do not know, or even pursue the truth of the gospel, did God have to cause me to come to that knowledge to make me a voice for the truth, that the contemporary church generally does not believe?

I want to believe that I could have, and did make a rational decision to study the subject and learn the truth of it. That would be the voluntary, faithful way to do whatever God wants us to do. Or, did God make me a part of a believing remnant, as he did with Israel, by reserving to himself, "all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal". Either way, I am thankful to God to know the truth, and have the privilege to serve him, in "defense and confirmation of the faith", by rightly dividing (discerning) the truth", which is every Christian's responsibility.

But, sadly the great majority of believers will stand guilty before the Lord, having failed to know and stand for complete gospel truth--even though it is the doctrinal foundation of their Christian lives, that they surely ought to thoroughly understand. Because, as in the construction of homes and other buildings, a foundation with weakness, or faulty materials could cause the building to be seriously compromised, impaired or even collapse. I realize that I have stated the contemporary church's future judgment with finality, but that is because Revelation end-time church prophecy shows a very negative picture, leaving no room for any significant possible revival or reformation to occur.

Referring again to the two historically great failures of man to choose to follow God, instead of Satan, and errant church leaders and teachers, there can be no aspersion cast against God, as if he made the wrong decision in trusting or allowing for man to be faithful to him, and meet his conditions which would have made the world immortal with him.

Believing and trusting in the perfections of God, including his purposes and decisions, his wisdom in endowing man (made in his image) with a completely free and capable self-determining will, must be the greatest likeness to God that man could possess (that is, also as lords of the earth, if sin had not intervened).

The second instance of the devastating consequence of the misuse of free will, occurs when a new Christian chooses to believe a false interpretation of the gospel, and fails to submit to scriptural testing of that concept of doctrine, and, hence, participates in corrupting the church into a continuing state of unfaithfulness, and degeneration.

Note, that I have used the term unfaithfulness in a general, or total sense, not only in connection with false gospel doctrine! Because, if a Christian is wrong about the gospel, which is the bedrock of salvation principles, and he has thereby broken fellowship with the Lord, how can he think, say or do anything else spiritually right, unless he confesses that sin first, and gets himself right with God?

It is, of course, sin, because it seriously disobeys and dishonors God, as there is no option to believe any variant interpretation of the gospel. In fact, in

perspective, it is a form of idolatry to believe and promote false teaching of God's word! Even a standard dictionary has a particular definition of an idol, as "a false notion or idea that causes errors in thinking or reasoning". Making, in effect, imaginary words of God, which not only misrepresent Him, but are merely religious beliefs concocted by man, that are detrimental to a Christian's life, and destructive to a church's integrity.

It is why the Lord is outside the church in Rev. 3:20 knocking for admittance, by whosoever will "hear his voice" (believe his gospel, and let him in). Which represents a picture of Christ, excluded from his church for most of two millenia. It is very interesting and meaningful, to note that Christ is the counterpart, or fulfillment of the Ark of the covenant, which was the "glory of God", in the tabernacle, under the dispensation of the "law of God".

Christ, then, is (or was to be) the comparative repository of the "glory of the Lord" in the church in the age of grace. When the ark was stolen from the tabernacle, it was said that "the glory of the lord has departed from Israel". Thus, when Christians do not believe and honor the true gospel, it means that the glory of the Lord (Christ) has departed from the church! He, having been forced out of his church by their rejection of critical gospel truth! In a subtext expression of reality, he has not been honored and worshipped, but turned from, and the church has fallen prey to the devil's "gospel" lies!

So what is the character, or testimony of a Christian who is indoctrinated with the Arminian, free will, universal atonement, false concept of the literal, biblical gospel? Except for a possible, circumstantial period of time to learn what may be an issue with new believers doctrinal understanding, it can only be confronted by the Christian himself. That is, he must be personally involved in scriptural study, whether alone, or with someone who could help him come to the truth of gospel principles, or other subjects in question.

If I said that the overwhelming majority of the universal church is devoid of complete gospel truth, most Christians would either react in disbelief, and probably anger, because they are falsely comforted by consensus agreement in an

adulterated form of the gospel, with most believers today. And, they would accuse me of being unorthodox, or a heretic--even though I would be in a truthful minority--however few that may include--throughout the church world. So, the truth of a subject or matter is not established by majority opinion, but on the inherent factual meaning of its content!

As a point of emphasis. in the years that I have been engaged in publishing website commentaries defending and confirming the true gospel, and other scriptural, and temporal subjects, I have received very little response--positive or negative--to the many articles I have written. While it is disappointing not to have had more interest shown (for their sake), one way or the other, it confirms how incorrigible the majority of believers are, who are practically unreachable, spiritually!

In light of the truth they do not know, and refuse to hear, they are like foolish gamblers, betting all they have (not their lives, but their beliefs and testimony) on a losing cause, when they should be, and could be, guaranteed winners with great rewards, and no risks!

But, unless God did something special through me, to lead me and use my material in some people's lives, and while there are the gifts of knowledge and teaching (that God ordained as helps to Christians), there is no valid reason to think that what I have learned and tried to communicate could be more effective than God's own word revealed throughout the New Testament on the subject., or any other part of his word!

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