

**SESSION 4**  
**PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**  
**Week of June 27th**

As we conclude our summer small groups, I pray that each session has helped you gain a better understanding of various worldviews. I thank each of you for showing compassion and being receptive to the sensitive and sometimes difficult dialogue surrounding each topic. In Session 4, you will discuss what is known in our modern day society as Progressive Christianity. In this era of “Cancel Culture,” there are Christians who want to implement reinterpreted versions of biblical doctrines. Christians who believe in the true inerrant Word of God must be aware of these views and interpretations of scripture.

**In this session you will:**

1. Define Progressive Christianity.
2. Discuss scriptures that are the subject of reinterpretation based on progressive views.
3. Discuss that despite opposing views Christians must respond in love.



Please view the video, and use the space below to take notes.

**Introduction: What is Christianity?**

Christianity is the belief that people repent of sinful lives through the saving grace of Jesus Christ. The early church believed in repenting of sins and confessing Jesus Christ as Lord.

Early Christians believed the following:

1. Man is sinful.
2. Christ is coming to judge.
3. Christ is the only way to salvation.

**READ:** Mt. 7:13-14, which speaks of the narrow way that leads to life.

**READ:** Acts 4:12, which says Jesus is the only name that leads to salvation.

**QUESTION:** What happens if these Christian biblical truths are diluted?

1. Jesus is the way to salvation.
2. Repentance is not needed for salvation.

3. There is not a coming judgment.
4. Man is sinful and does not need a savior and salvation.

*NOTE* these fundamental beliefs about Christianity and the Gospel.

1. If man is not sinful, then there is no need for the doctor. Mark 2:17
2. If Jesus is not who He claimed to be, then there is no need for evangelism. John 14:6
3. If there is no coming judgment, there is no need to examine our ways so we can eat and drink for we will die tomorrow. I Corinthians 15:32

These doctrines are being dismantled by the beliefs of the Progressive Christians.

### **The Dilemma**

Progressive Christianity is more concerned about social justice, ending racism, slowing global warming, redistributing wealth, and ending all vestiges of oppression.

Some younger Christians who have no allegiance to their church or have no church are using social justice campaigns to support their Christianity, and they want to be a crusader for various justice campaigns.

The goal of Progressive Christianity is to provide a fresh approach to the faith with new priorities and righteous goals. How do you do that without sacrificing your Christian identity?

The Cancel Culture is silencing Bible-believing truth with attempts to include everyone..

### **Review Some Examples of Cancel Culture**

1. Pertaining to Jesus: We affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide one of the many ways to experience God.
2. Pertaining to church fellowship: Seeks to create a community that is inclusive of ALL people, not just Bible-believing but agnostics, those of various sexual orientations as well as all gender identities
3. Pertaining to the Bible: Denies that the Bible is inerrant or infallible

### **Progressive Christians**

1. Do not believe Jesus is the way to salvation, nor that humanity is sinful and in need of being saved and not in danger of the judgment.
2. Discipleship is more about kindness except when confronting social justice.
3. Homosexuality and transgenderism are celebrated.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTION**

How would you explain this quote by Anna Skate, a progressive youth minister?

“ There is nothing inherent to these children’s humanity from which they need to be saved. Therefore, an atonement theology of inborn corruption in need of redemption has no place in a conversation with kids about Easter.”

### **Christians Must Understand**

The work of the church is the salvation of souls and the making of disciples; other goals, such as charity and social justice, are important but secondary to the gospel.

If we are not teaching (1) that humanity is sinful and in need of salvation, (2) that salvation is found only in Christ and (3) the judgment of hell is real, then we are not giving people the full and essential counsel of God.

### **Be careful and watch for signs of Progressive Christianity within the church:**

1. Lowered view of the Bible
2. Feelings emphasized more than facts
3. Essential Christian doctrines open to reinterpretation
4. Historical terms redefined
5. Heart of the gospel message shifting from sin and redemption to social justice

## **DISCUSSION ISSUES**

1. Do you think young people are leaving the church because of its rigid dogma?
2. Do you think people are turned off by Christianity because they no longer see it as relevant?
3. Do you think telling people they are sinful is emotionally damaging to them?
4. Do you think saying Jesus is the only way to God is exclusionary and discounts the experience of non Christians?

### **Christians must maintain Biblical truths and respond in ways that show love.**

1. Truth must be spoken in love. I Corinthians 13:1
2. Love always rejoices in the truth. I Corinthians 13:6
3. Consensus does not determine truth. Matthew 7:13-14

### **Group Assignment**

*Choose one of the discussion issues above, and write one Christian response to that issue. Please submit your group answer to the pastor at the end of this session.*