

1. Over 50 percent of the world's religions are tied to the claim that the Bible is true.
2. The acceptance of the Bible as being true is based on their own interpretation and translation of the Scripture.
3. Many religious groups say they see the Bible as the standard - but in practice they hold to authorities placed above the Bible.
4. However - those who hold to a purely Biblical/Christian world view see the Bible as being absolutely true.
5. Also - just because someone claims to be a Christian does not mean that they truly believe in the Jesus Christ of Scripture and have repented of their sin and received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
6. The next question is - do they really believe that the Bible is the sole authority in their lives?
7. Or do they merely accept the name Christian simply as a "cultural Christian."
8. This is a biblical authority issue where man's ideas have been elevated to be greater than what God has declared.
9. It should be the other way around - our thoughts or ideas should be judged based on the Word of God.
10. The Bible is the standard by which all other truth claims should be judged - because it is the only written revelation from God to man.
11. Man's ideas often get elevated to be greater than God and His Word.
12. Progressive Christianity/Theology. Due to the diversity of beliefs that fall under that designation - it is difficult to pin down.
13. However, there are signs—certain phrases and ideas—that seem to be consistent in Progressive circles.
14. The following are 5 danger signs of Progressive Christianity/Theology:

A. There is a lowered view of the Bible

One of the main differences between Progressive Christianity and Historic Christianity is its view of the Bible. Historically, Christians have viewed the Bible as the Word of God and authoritative for our lives. Progressive Christianity generally abandons these terms, emphasizing personal belief over biblical mandate.

B. Feelings are emphasized over facts

In Progressive churches, personal experiences, feelings, and opinions tend to be valued above objective truth. As the Bible ceases to be viewed as God's definitive word, what a person feels to be true becomes the ultimate authority for faith and practice.

C. Essential Christian doctrines are open for re-interpretation

Progressive author John Pavlovitz wrote; "There are no sacred cows [in Progressive Christianity].... Tradition, dogma, and doctrine are all fair game, because all pass through the hands of flawed humanity." Progressive Christians are often open to re-defining and re-interpreting the Bible on hot-button moral issues like homosexuality and abortion, and also cardinal doctrines such as the virgin conception and the bodily resurrection of Jesus. The only sacred cow is "no sacred cows."

Comments you might hear:

- *The resurrection of Jesus doesn't have to be factual to speak truth.*
- *The church's historic position on sexuality is archaic and needs to be updated within a modern framework.*
- *The idea of a literal hell is offensive to non-Christians and needs to be re-interpreted.*

D. Historic terms are re-defined

Progressive Christians who say they affirm doctrines like biblical inspiration, inerrancy, and authority, have to do linguistic gymnastics to make those words mean what *they want them to mean*.

From an actual conversation with a Progressive pastor; "Do you believe the Bible is divinely inspired?" He answered confidently, "Yes, of course!" However, I mistakenly assumed that when using the word "inspired," we both meant the same thing. He clarified months later what he meant—that the Bible is inspired *in the same way* and *on the same level* as many other Christian books, songs, and sermons.

This, of course, is not how Christians have historically understood the doctrine of divine inspiration.

Another word that tends to get a Progressive make-over is the word "love." When taken out of its biblical context, it becomes a catch-all term for everything non-confrontative, pleasant, and affirming.

Comments you might hear:

- *God wouldn't punish sinners—He is love....*
- *It's not our job to talk to anyone about sin—it's our job to just love them...*

E. The heart of the gospel message shifts from sin and redemption to social justice

There is no doubt that the Bible commands us to take care of the unfortunate and defend those who are oppressed. This is a very real and profoundly important part of what it means to live out our Christian faith.

However, the core message of Christianity—the gospel—is that Jesus died for our sins, was buried and rose again, thereby reconciling us to God. This is the message that will truly bring freedom to the oppressed.

Progressive Christianity finds the concept of God sending His Son to die on the cross to be embarrassing or even appalling. Sometimes referred to as “cosmic child abuse,” the idea of blood atonement is de-emphasized or denied altogether, with social justice and good works elevated in its place.

Comments you might hear:

- *Sin doesn't separate us from God—we are made in His image and He called us good...*
- *God didn't actually require a sacrifice for our sins—the first Christians picked up on the pagan practice of animal sacrifice and told the Jesus story in similar terms....*
- *We don't really need to preach the gospel—we just need to show love by bringing justice to the oppressed and provision to the needy..*

Identifying the signs is not always obvious—sometimes they are subtle and mixed with a lot of truth. Progressive Christianity can be persuasive and enticing, but carried out to its logical end, it is an assault on the foundational framework of Christianity, leaving it disarmed of its saving power.

Taken from a Progressive conversation:

“I am glad that you recognize the difference because you should follow what you believe. It doesn't make their path wrong, just different than yours. Even the Catholic church since Vatican II recognized the bible as a book of faith and not of science or history. I am surprised that you still trust men who chose a collection of stories and then called it Inspired makes it so. There wasn't anything divine about that effort. The younger generation is going to look at things more objectively and not just believe what they are told to believe. Those that hold to the bible as literal will only drive the faithful away. Eventually, they will move beyond the faith of their fathers and recognize it all as mythology and appreciate it for what it is. The myth is that those that don't believe like you don't have as much moral values, but they seem to have more.”