

Diminishing Doctrine in the Presentation of the Gospel of Christ

1. Salvation in the New Testament

The completion of eternal soul redemption by the finished work of Christ on Calvary's cross. (*John 3:16-18; II Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:24-25; Rom. 5:10; Gal. 1:4*)

A. The nature of the old man

1. The fall / the Adamic nature of man – sin and depravity, the result of Adam's disobedience and apostasy, were received by hereditary transmission to his "seed". (*Gen. 3:1-19; Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3*)
2. The natural man's desire to choose sin and to reject the Saviour. (*I Cor. 2:14; Eph 4:22-24; I Cor. 1:18*)

B. The new man / indwelling Holy Spirit – The old nature vs. the new nature in the Christian's battle for godliness. (*Rom. 6:16-23; Rom. 7:11-25; Gal. 5:16-17; Eph. 4:22-24*)

C. The sin question

1. The fall of mankind (Adam and Eve) in the garden (*Gen. 3*)
2. The penalty for sin is death inflicted on the human race (*Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12*)
3. The fall of man embodies a curse and a promise.
 - a. The curse (*Gen. 3:14-19*)
 - b. The promise (*Gen. 3:15*) "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
4. The universality of sin
 - a. Rom. 3:23 "For all have sinned..."
 - b. Rom. 5:12 "...so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."
5. The payment for sin
 - a. Rom. 6:23a "For the wages of sin is death..."
 - b. II Cor. 5:21a "For he hath made him to be sin for us..."
 - c. Gal. 1:4a "...gave himself for our sins..."

D. Sacrificial Saviour (*Isa. 53*)

6. Gal. 3:13 “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law...”
7. Gal. 1:4 “ Who gave himself for our sins...”
8. Rom. 5:10b “...we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son...”
9. II Cor. 5:21a “For he hath made him to be sin for us...”
10. Heb. 9:14a “ How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God...”
11. Heb. 9:28a “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many...”
12. Heb. 10:12a “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever...”
13. Heb. 9:26b “...but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

E. The only Saviour

1. John 14:6
2. Acts 4:12
3. John 10:9
4. John 3:16-21

F. Receiving the Saviour (the gift of God) (*Rom. 6:23; II Cor. 9:15*)

1. John 1:12
2. John 3:16
3. Rom. 10:9-13
4. John 13:19-20

G. Repentance and Faith (*nocham*) Clearing of conscience; peace of mind and heart (*II Cor. 7:10*)

1. Repentance (*metanoeo*) to have another mind-set or change of mind. Repentance includes confession of sin with heart and mind; a desire (willingness) to change direction in response to His Lordship!
 - a. Matt. 3:2 “...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
 - b. Mk. 1:15b “...repent ye, and believe the gospel.”
 - c. Lk. 13:3-5 “...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

- d. Lk. 15:7 "...joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."
- e. Lk. 24:47 "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations..."
- f. Acts 2:38 "...Repent, and be baptized every one of you..."
- g. Acts 3:19 "Repent ye therefore, and be converted..."
- h. Acts 17:30 "...commandeth all men everywhere to repent"
- i. Acts 20:21 "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"
- j. II Cor. 7:9-10 "...godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation."
- k. II Pet. 3:9 "...but that all should come to repentance."
- l. Heb. 6:1 "...repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God."

H. Faith = taking God at His Word (a simple heart trust)

- 1. Rom. 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
- 2. Heb. 11:1-6 (biblical faith)
 - a. v. 1 "...substance of things hoped for..."
 - b. v. 2 Old Testament saints who had lived by a trust in Jehovah, God of the Old Testament.
 - c. v. 3 The creator, God, spoke the world into existence and put in order his design, purpose, and intent for all generations. Repentance and faith in this creator God and his promises remain the will of God for future generations. God's plan is not human manipulation or achievement, but to have faith only in the promises and provisions of the creator, not by "...things that do appear."
 - d. v. 6 This kind of faith pleases God.

I. Security of the Saviour

- 3. John 3:16; 3:36 (everlasting life)
- 4. Eph. 1:13; 4:30
- 5. John 10:27-29

J. The life of sanctification for the Saviour (*II Cor 1:10*)

Note: The believer has the power to overcome sin and live a life that is pleasing to Christ! The believer plays a part in this area of progressive sanctification by a day-by-day yielding to the Holy Spirit. II Cor. 1:10 gives the three tenses of this process.

- 1) "...delivered us from so great a death..." Delivery from the penalty of sin.
- 2) "...and doth deliver..." Delivery from the power of sin.
- 3) "...will yet deliver..." Delivery from the presence of sin.

2. The process of progressive sanctification

Many Christians, young and old alike, seem to take on or emphasize particular concerns or desires in their Christian lives. This limited view of progressive sanctification (only what is important to me), such as family, friends, Bible reading, soul winning, church attendance, etc., can limit our ability for growth, discernment, practice and outreach for Christ. Without a doubt, attention to and growth in all of these areas is Christ honoring. However, many believers with such limited priorities have "staked out their campground," and there they will stay for the rest of their Christian lives. As we look further into this study, we will find that this one- or two- string theology for Christian growth is not the sound teaching of scripture.

Progressive sanctification is more than some predetermined priorities and areas of obedience for any believer. Thank God, for those who make any biblical truth a priority in their obedience! However, the life-long process of sanctification or being set apart goes far beyond majoring on a few selected areas of importance and service. It encompasses God's person, his dealings with mankind, his will, and our obedience to his commands, precepts, and principles.

I believe the Apostle Paul had Christian growth in mind as he considered this process of growth called sanctification. Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian church was that he "kept back nothing that was profitable unto you" (*Acts 20:10*). The Apostle Paul had not shunned to declare unto them "all the council of God" (*Acts 20:27*). Paul understood that the Ephesian assembly needed to know the then revealed will of God for their lives. Today, we have the complete body of truth, which when obeyed, can

continually change our lives to the conformity of Christ just as it did for the Ephesian believers.

In Mt. 22:36-37, the Lord Jesus himself expresses as a foundational truth the very center of his will and desire for faith and practice in every believer's life. This surrendering of heart, soul, and mind to the Lordship of Christ applies to old and new believers alike! It involves releasing or letting go of the old man, the desires, and directives of the old nature and putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus uses the triune parts of the inner man (*Mt. 22:37*) to illustrate the needed commitment to his Lordship - a sincere willingness and desire to put Christ first and submit daily to his commands, directives, precepts, and principles.

A. The Commitment of each part (*Mt. 22:37*)

1. The **heart** – The seat of the person's will and the center of one's emotions.
2. The **soul** – The conscience of thought, concerns (right or wrong) and convictions within the inner man.
3. The **mind** – The seat of human reason, perception, and understanding that affects emotion and will (for good or bad).

A **heart, soul, and mind** committed to his Lordship will produce obedience, fruit, and growth in any Christian's life. Victory over sin, living the victorious life, and growing in grace and knowledge are just a few of the by-products in the process of sanctification. The surrendered life is not an emotional superficial commitment. It is not self reformation of human manipulation (which creates an up and down ride), but it is a heart, soul, and mind commitment to the Saviour, with no strings attached!

Obedience to scripture truth extends equally to all commands, precepts, and principles of the Word of God. There are no "essential" or "non-essential" priorities in an all-out, sound commitment to the Lord. A willingness to submit - heart, soul, and mind - opens my life and yours to the working of the Holy Spirit within us. This kind of surrender brings obedience to his Word and exalts Christ.

B. The new Christian needs to get started right away to grow in grace and experience the victorious life!

Theological Views on New Testament Evangelism

1. Calvinism—John Calvin (1509–1564)

A systematic theology dealing in covenants with mankind throughout all ages. Election is a driving force in this theology. God predetermines one's actions and salvation before the foundation of the world, apart from any involvement of mankind. Reaching, leading and winning souls to Christ is “contrary to scripture” in Calvinistic theology.

2. Arminianism—Jacob Hermann Arminius (1560–1609)

Arminius was a Dutch theologian who, after receiving a strict reformed training, conceived some doubts with respect to Calvinistic tenets on the sovereign grace of God in salvation and related themes.

Note: Many of the 24 points of this theological system are sound. Listed here are the unscriptural points:

No. 18 The believer is able to attain in this life a state of such conformity to the divine will that he may be called perfect.

No. 19 As long as a man lives, he may fall away from grace and lose his salvation altogether.

No. 21 The goal of creation is the happiness of the creatures. (What is meant by this statement? N.J.M.)

No. 24 Assurance of salvation is not possible in this life, except by special personal revelation.

3. Pentecostalism (Armenian in their belief pertaining to assurance and security—No assurance! No security!)

(1873-1929) Pentecostalism is a modern American movement that emerged out of the Holiness movement. The two key figures in its founding were Charles Fox Parham and William J. Seymour.

Unscriptural views relating to salvation held by Pentecostals:

- A. Faith & works
- B. Doctrine of the Holy Spirit
- C. Doctrine of sanctification
- D. Doctrine of separation
- E. Ecclesiology

4. Modernism Religious liberalism (sometimes called modernism)

Modernism is based upon a post-(so-called) enlightenment period in Germany of rational thought (unbelief). Scripture was considered inquisition and not counted trustworthy in theological areas. The person and sacrificial work of Christ was under attack and reinterpreted in human form.

- A. Humanity of Christ was to be an example to mankind that the so-called believers would follow to obtain a state of righteousness (social gospel).
- B. A spark of divinity lies within all man from birth.
- C. Salvation was viewed no longer as forgiveness from sin and wrath, but from sensuousness or materialistic selfishness that needed to be eradicated through good works.
- D. There is no need for a spiritual rebirth.
- E. There is no radical division of saved and lost. All men are held to possess religious potential. All mankind form the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God.¹

¹ Schermacher, *The Christian Faith* (1928)

5. Fundamentalism

An interdenominational movement of essential/non-essential doctrine and practice. A protestant movement of all stripes joining hands for the purpose of unity and the “greater cause of Christ.” In the areas of evangelism and easy-believeism, a lack of repentance and Lordship are on the increase. Protestant churches and para-church organizations, including some Independent Baptists, have committed to these compromises.

6. New Evangelicalism - (Dr. Carl Henry, Bernard Ramm, Billy Graham, Dr. Harold J. Ockenga, Dr. Vernon Grounds)

A movement breaking from the fundamental ranks over a reevaluation of scripture and the doctrine of separation. Ecumenical evangelism employs this type of philosophy, which is weak on repentance, Lordship, doctrine and discipleship. Clear teaching on progressive sanctification is considered a non essential and nebulous at best.

Missing Ingredients Among Some Christians in Outreach Ministry

- 1) Saving faith based on repentance and receiving Christ as Lord and Saviour.
- 2) No New Testament church membership
- 3) Humble servant; teachable spirit (*I Pet. 5:6*)
- 4) Prepared servant (*II Tim. 2:21*) false teachers / false teachings
- 5) Clean, transparent and separated servant (*Eph 5:11; Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 6:14-17*)
- 6) A life style understanding of outreach! (*II Cor. 5:18-20*)
 - a. Ministry of reconciliation v 18-19
 - A. Ministry of ambassadorship v 20

Building Blocks to Provide a Sound Foundation for the New Christian

- 1) The new creation—Christ is Saviour and Lord! A new life with a new owner, the Lord Jesus Christ. (*II Cor. 5:17*)
- 2) Home Base—the local, New Testament Assembly! My place for worship, fellowship, preaching, teaching and service. (*I Tim. 3:15*)
- 3) The scriptures—Keeping a straight path; obedience and commitment to truth. “...Thy word is truth.” (*Jn. 17:17; Jas. 1:25*)
- 4) Prayer and Reliance on the scriptures only! (*Phil. 4:6; I Thes. 5:17; Rom. 4:21*)
- 5) Involvement in my local church (*Eph 4:7–12*)
- 6) Standing faithful, steadfast and serving (*I Cor. 15:58*)
- 7) Focus on the Lord Jesus—Stand and live for him as a testimony of his saving grace, reaching out with the gospel message. The Apostle Paul explained this responsibility in simple terms in II Cor. 5:18-20 “...Now then we are ambassadors for Christ...” with a message and ministry of reconciliation.

Church Age Evangelism

My church—the New Testament Assembly

1. The church, a divine program (*Mt. 16:18; Eph 3:21; I Tim. 3:15*)

A. Mt. 28:19, 20; Mt. 16:18

“...I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (age). The Lord Jesus is the headmaster of his churches as they prevail through the ages. This institutional program will end at the return of Christ for his saints.

B. I Tim. 3:15 “...pillar and ground of the truth.”

The New Testament assembly is ordained of God to proclaim the gospel and the whole council of his inspired, preserved word! Paul encourages Timothy to “preach the word” in and out of season within the local assembly. The purpose: to reprove, rebuke and to exhort the church of God in every generation.

C. Eph. 3:21 “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.”

Eph. 3:21 pictures the Lord Jesus and his headship of his assemblies through the generations or ages in perpetuity. This New Testament representation stands as a gospel lighthouse, proclaimer, propagator, and guardian of truth for the saints of God.

2. The Church with a divine commission in evangelism: The command of Christ

(*Mt. 18:19, 20*)

A. Disciples (new converts)—a new creation(*Mt. 18:3; II Cor. 5:17*)

B. Baptizing—Identification with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection and his local assembly. (*Rom. 6:3, 4, 5; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27; I Cor. 12:13*)

3. The church, a soul-winning body (*Mt. 28:19; Acts 1:8, 5:42, 16:5*)
Soul winning tools

A. Study (Knowledge, understanding and wisdom) in Action! (*I Tim. 3:15; Phil. 1:1, 10; Rom. 15:4*)

1. Zeal without knowledge (*Rom. 10:2; Ps. 119:27, 34, 42, 130*)
2. “Wise men lay up knowledge...” (*Prov. 10:14, 15:14*)
3. Man of knowledge “...spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.” (*Prov. 17:27*)
4. “A wise man is strong: yea a man of knowledge increaseth strength.” (*Prov. 24:5*)
5. “The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge.” (*Prov. 18:15*)
6. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (*Prov. 1:7*)
7. Hear the words of wisdom, “apply thine heart unto my knowledge.” (*Prov. 22:17*)
8. The wise man “. . .he receiveth knowledge.” (*Prov. 21:11*)
9. “...he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.” (*Dan. 2:21*)
10. “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge...” (*Hos. 4:6*)
11. Right judgments, “Give me now wisdom and knowledge...for who can judge this thy people.” (*II Chr. 1:10*)
12. “...words without knowledge.” (*Job 38:2*)
13. A false representation of truth. (*Rom. 2:20, 21*)
14. Danger of knowledge “...Knowledge puffeth up” (*I Cor. 8:1*)
15. Love expressed in greater “...knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent...” (*Phil. 1:9, 10*)
16. “...the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord...” (*Phil. 3:8*)
17. “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge...” (*II Pet. 3:18*)
18. Growing in all “...knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” (*Col. 1:9*) “...increasing in the knowledge of God.” (*Col. 1:10*)

—Look at progression of Matt. 22:37—

- A. Memorize (*Ps. 119:11; I Pet. 3:15; Ps. 119:38, 42*)
- B. Surrender self and all that I have (*Rom. 12:1, 2; I Cor. 6:19, 20; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 12:13*)
- C. Dependence on the Holy Spirit (*John 16:7, 8; John 6:33; Rom. 8:26; I Cor. 2:10–13; Eph. 4:30; I Thess. 2:13; I John 3:24*)
- D. Endure hardness (*II Tim. 2:3; Heb. 3:13–19*)
- E. Patience (*Prov. 3:5, 6; Lk. 8:15* [sower of the seed]; [tribulation worketh patience] *Rom. 5:3, 4*; [patience and comfort] *Rom. 15:4*)
- F. Pray (talk, not preach) (*Eph. 6:18; I Tim. 2:1; I Thess. 5:17; Rom. 8:21*)
- G. Working (one-on-one) with lost souls; Developing people skills
 1. Listen—be patient (*Lk. 8:15*) “...bring forth fruit with patience.”
 2. Focus of mind, speech—measured words (*II Cor. 10:5*) A biblical mentality; (*Ps. 19:7, 14*) Words that convert and give wisdom; words that are “...acceptable in thy sight...” (*Isa. 50:4*) “...that I should know how to speak a word in season...”
 3. Evaluate—problem or need? Keep focused and on track!
 4. Use of scriptures and not feelings or opinions—the Word and the Holy Spirit! (*John 6:63; Heb. 4:12; Lk. 24:27-32*)
 5. Wait on the Holy Spirit to do his work! (*John 16:8; Lk. 24:32–burning hearts*)

4. Pointing the lost to Christ!

- A. Evangelism as a life style (*II Cor. 5:18–20*)
 1. Ambassadorship
 2. I Pet. 3:15 “...and be ready always to give an answer to every man”

B. A communication of one's life

1. I Tim. 6:12 "...hath professed a good profession before many witnesses."
2. Phil. 1:27 "Only let your conversation (life style) be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. . ."

C. Soul awareness and verbal responsibility

1. Mt. 16:26—gain the world and lose your soul!
2. Ezk. 33:8 ". . .if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked..."

D. A prepared witness

1. I Pet. 3:15—ready to answer
2. II Tim. 2:21—vessel of honor

5. Discipleship in the New Testament Assembly

"Teaching them to observe..." (*Mat. 28:20*)

A. Qualified member to provide discipleship course or class.

B. Personal fellowship, encouragement and meeting needs as much as possible!

C. Taking new converts visiting

6. Church planting (churches planting churches)

A. Paul's missionary journeys

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

New Testament Evangelism

The subject of evangelism in our present evangelical world is widespread in its teaching and methodology. In light of so much error and compromise, should we not ask the question: What is New Testament evangelism? For the believer who wants to be biblical in his outreach for Christ, there are no options. The answer simply: **sound directives** and **pattern from scripture** (*Ps. 119.133*).

Just to make sure of clarity on this matter, the biblical Christian's commitment is to sound directives or commands that are carried out by faith and practice! This faith and practice concept can be seen from the beginning of creation and throughout the entire Old Testament. Jehovah God showed his purpose and program for his people (Israel) and to all mankind as recorded in scripture.

In reference to his purpose, Isaiah conveys what the heart of God planned for his creation and mankind, which was to "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (*Isa. 45:22*). The creator God of the Old Testament was to be exalted in word and obedience, to lift up his promise of a coming Redeemer Messiah, Savior and King! Alongside this glorious promise was a set, visible program of worship and sacrifice until the prophesy of a Messiah would be fulfilled.

The sacrificial system concludes with the coming of Christ and the New Testament. (*Mk. 1: 1-2; Lk. 16:16*) The Lord himself during his public ministry would call a functioning assembly into place to bring in the church age!

Let's take in chronological order God's plan for his people's worship, both personal and corporate.

1. The Altar of Sacrifice (*mizbeah*)—place of blood sacrifice (*Gen. 3:21; 4:4; 8:20; Ex. 20:24*)

Prior to the consecration of Moses tabernacle, the altar usually consisted of a number of unhewn stones (lay alters) used for an atonement for personal sin. After the inauguration of the tabernacle (*Ex. 40*), blood sacrifices were performed within the tabernacle in a corporate setting.

2. The Tabernacle—Temporary dwelling place of God (*Ex. 40:34; shekinah glory*)

Altar sacrifices, both personal and corporate setting:

The tabernacle was a visible worship and sacrificial center. Nothing was left to self-desire or self-will; every tribe and every man in his place, with the priesthood in place. This ordained, visible program for the Jew would be a shadow of a new and future institution—the “church of the living God.”

3. The Temple—Solomon’s temple (*I Kings 8:11; II Chronicles 5*)

- B. Shekinah glory
- C. Permanent dwelling place
- D. Sacrifices

4. Church age—Institution of the New Testament Church: my church! (*Mt. 16:18; I Tim. 3:15; Eph. 3:6, 3:21; I Cor. 12:27*) Corporate worship and outreach; The local church.

- A. 1 A body commissioned to evangelize
 - 1. one-to-one
 - 2. house-to-house
 - 3. Jerusalem, Judaea and regions beyond (church planting)
- B. A body with equal responsibility; unified, with the purpose of reaching the world for Christ.
- C. A body of gifted members
 - 1. Edification
 - 2. Exhortation
 - 3. Encouragement
 - 4. Developing their gifts for service
- D. A commissioned body (*Mt. 28:19-20*)

No prima donnas or those that are seeking preeminence as gifted within the assembly, but corporate responsibility for all members; a missionary

outreach to the lost in the spirit of unity and purpose as “one body in Christ.” (*Rom. 12:5*)

5. Tools needed for church-wide evangelism and outreach

Soul winning is not a gift, but a responsibility given to every believer by God. Believers are to be active in preparation, developing skills to help them witness outside the house of God. Outreach is a lifestyle and not just a commitment for a period of time or during a particular event.

- A. Study and memorize scripture
- B. Education of one's self
- C. Developing people skills
- D. Opportunities and open doors
- E. Have or develop a spirit of humility and meekness
- F. Total dependence on the Holy Spirit!
- G. Sincere prayer to do only what the Holy Spirit wants done!

Discipleship of a New Believer

- 1) Friendship and encouragement**
- 2) Bible follow-up**
- 3) Visiting with new convert**
- 4) Giving one's testimony**

Thoughts and Concerns in Relationship to Evangelism

- 1) Views of evangelism/Calvinism/easy-believeism**
- 2) Superficial decisions/reality of conversion (picking green fruit)**
- 3) Understanding repentance (*II Cor. 7:10*)**
- 4) Understanding Lordship (*Jn. 13:13-16, 14:15, 15:20*)**
- 5) The need for and reliance upon the Holy Spirit (*Jn. 16:8*)**