

THE FOUR PILLARS OF FALSE EVANGELISM



*"A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies."
-Proverbs 14:5*

Our Christian duty, particularly in evangelism, is to represent God. Not simply to talk about God, but to speak for Him. To, as it were, provide a human mouthpiece whereby God can interject His Word in today's culture. To do this, we must show courage, conviction, and commitment. Furthermore, there must be a willingness to forsake a life of shadowy darkness and wholeheartedly embrace the light. This is inherently linked to the governing principle of the cross. Is Jesus truly our Lord? Are we utterly committed to God, His will, His Word, and His Way? We must come to realize, we cannot save our own life and simultaneously exalt His. We must lose our life, so that the precious life of Christ might be lifted and exalted. Now, let no man deceive you, all spiritual progress involves sacrifice.

Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Likewise, every sphere of Christian discipleship has its specific cost; evangelism is no exception.

Luke 10:2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few...

The laborers are few because the sacrifice to enter the harvest is great. If we're to truly preach the gospel, as it should be preached, we must understand and accept the cost (we are not going to necessarily be appreciated). To preach the gospel is to exalt Christ and Christ is the truth.

John 12:32 ...if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Hence, we cannot say we are exalting Christ while we soften the blow, or otherwise obscure the truth.

Ironically, the claims of mass conversions abound while the popularity for truth telling continues to plummet. Something must be amiss.

Proverbs 14:25 A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies.

In a phrase, truth-telling constitutes our obligation as Biblical evangelists.

Acts 20:26-27 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

However, those, who secretly harbor sin/compromise are disturbed by the light.

John 3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light...

Few believe they are lying, but like the religious pundits of Jesus' day they...

Mark 7:13 Mak(e)ing the word of God of none effect through (their) your tradition...

Many today are embarrassed with God's methodology. They apparently feel obligated to apologize for His ways and His Words. They subconsciously suppose that God is a bit outdated, His method's are obsolete, and are unfit for the 21st century. Hence, they believe that they're merely doing Jesus a service in adjusting His methods and character to appeal to a broader base of interest. Accordingly, modern day evangelistic methods tend to work off these four progressive false premises: meaning one logically unfolds into another. Thus, "The four pillars of false Evangelism:"

MEN ARE SEEN AS VICTIMS OF SIN, INSTEAD OF CULPRITS

Romans 2:15 ...the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another

Sinners are not misguided unfortunates, but depraved rebels who knowingly resist God. Now, the fact that Scripture refers to men as "sinners" expresses culpability. For sinners are those who willfully commit sin. Sin, both in nature and behavior, is nothing more than a bold reflection of man's universal defiance against God.

"There is a danger in these days of toning down the meaning of the word {sin} until it means something less altogether than what the Bible teaches, and what God means by sin. Some regard it as a sort of pardonable naughtiness for which men are to be pitied rather than blamed, the result of weakness rather than wickedness, but the Bible teaching is very different. Sin is lawlessness. It is setting up our will against God's will. Sin defies law because it is law; resist restraint because it is restraint; contest authority with God because He is God."

-Thomas Cook

We know, among other things, repentance demands a change of mind in regards to sin. Hence, it stands to reason, a failure to repent, leaves men with flowery and permissive ideas about sin. An inward sympathy with sin and sinners reveals a heart that is still allied with rebellion. We want the sinner to

repent and be delivered but we dare not soft-soap His disobedience.

Isaiah 57:21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

Nobody, and I mean nobody, who has truly repented will casually oppose the public denunciation of sin and sinners.

Exodus 23:1 Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

Graphic shaming of sin, accurate and frank descriptions for sinners, is when this undercurrent of sympathy will surface. This Antinomian church-age is opposed to law with its restrictions, restraints, and condemnation of insubordination.

Proverbs 28:4-5 They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them. 5 Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things.

The worldly-wise sages of the new gospel, in their refusal to repent themselves, have manufactured a message void of repentance. They've come to assume that sinners are victims, rather than culprits, and this leads us to our next pillar...

IT IS PRESUMED THAT GOD IS MISUNDERSTOOD, RATHER THAN HATED BY FALLEN MAN

John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If we embrace the concept that sinners are passive victims we must assume they are misinformed, rather than opposed to God. The Bible teaches that fallen humanity exists in a state of latent hostility, opposition, and hatred toward God. The Scriptures define this universal condition as sin and the individuals therein as sinners. Amazingly, I have often heard preachers describing their past lives saying, "I wasn't a bad person, I just didn't know God." Such statements reveal, at best, a deep misunderstanding of the Bible doctrine of the fall of man. The abject depravity of sinful humanity is described in...

Romans 8:7-8 ...the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Enmity: {Greek} ekh'-thrah, Hostility, or hatred ~ it is even translated "hatred" in Galatians 5:20 describing the works of the flesh.

Thus, simply stated: *all sinners hate God*. There is nothing more fundamental to Christianity as the

doctrinal truths that sinners are utterly sinful and God is altogether holy. However, I have found there is perhaps nothing more offensive to the ignorant, the unconverted, and the religious hypocrite. Again, this reveals we say "Amen" to the Bible in theory, but reject it in practice. Men must be born-again for many reasons, but one is that sinners don't have the capacity to love God.

I've heard men say that the interest we see today for the occult is an indication that men are spiritually hungry. This is not only unscriptural but foolish. How does infatuation with Satan translate into a hunger for Jesus? Others, are saying that multitudes of Buddhist, Muslims, and pagans are sincere, but only misguided, "if they could only hear..." they say. True, we must preach, some will repent, but they are not victims...

Romans 1:20 ...so that they are without excuse

The Bible clearly teaches that no one is seeking God apart from prevenient grace that comes from the declaration of the gospel.

Romans 3:11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

We must communicate that the breach between man and God is of a moral nature. Otherwise, we will misrepresent Him.

Jeremiah 23:17 They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.

But the false gospel of today overlooks the opposition of sinful man towards God, and...

THEREFORE, THE PROBLEM IS CONSIDERED ONE OF COMMUNICATION, RATHER THAN RECONCILIATION

2 Cor. 5:18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation...

Reconciliation: {Greek} kat-al-lag-ay', To restore to divine favor by means of faith in the atonement.

The false church of today subconsciously supposes gospel declaration is a mere matter of providing men with information. They scold the Biblical evangelist with, "you can't simply come out here and denounce sin and proclaim judgment, you must explain." However, we are not called to inform but to reconcile. And not only this, but we are called to reconcile men unto God, not God unto men. We don't cloak the terrible realities of sin and judgment in an attempt to make the gospel more acceptable to the carnal mind. Reconciliation is the act of bringing two opposing parties to peaceful terms. This is impossible

apart from a change. Again, we cannot promote reconciliation without preaching repentance. And, we cannot preach repentance without exposing sin. Someone is wrong, someone is guilty, someone should be ashamed, and someone must change. The Holy Ghost, as Jesus said, comes to reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Reason: {Hebrew} yaw-kahh', To dispute, judge, plead, convict, convince, correct, rebuke, reprove.

The first order of business with God is to deal with men not on an intellectual plane, but rather on a moral plane. When I was lost I intellectually denied the faith but I had a defiled, agitated conscience. But all this is unnecessary if there is merely a misunderstanding. Let the un-churched, as they say, simply see the benefits of the gospel. That God wants them happy and prosperous. That Jesus has secured an eternal place for them in paradise.

That all this is a free gift, no strings attached, come and enjoy. No used car salesman ever made a better pitch.

CONSEQUENTLY, INSTEAD OF CALLING MEN TO REPENTANCE, WE URGE THEM TO GIVE GOD A CHANCE

This is what the great gospel message has been reduced to today. Apparently, the Biblical God is a bit too Victorian for our contemporary tastes. Terrifying folks with tales of fiery judgment and eternal damnation is considered religiously incorrect. So we've carefully stripped all the majesty and glory from the holy God of the Bible and transformed Him into a heavenly pauper begging for a chance to just show Himself valid. Is there any wonder why our churches are so powerless and impure?

In closing, allow me, for the sake of illustration, to paraphrase the basic gospel appeal of the modern church as she employs her new evangelistic appeal and presents a God nowhere found in the Bible...

"Hey, Mr. Sinner, would you just give Me an opportunity? I can make life better, honest. Sweeten the pot, enhance your life experience, make you happy, prosperous. Just give me a chance. How about a new house? New car? New wardrobe? You'd look good in alligator. What's that? Oh no, I've changed, really I have. Pay no attention to the old rhetoric of judgment and wrath, I'm the God of the N.T.. Trust me, I'm no trouble at all, give me a shot, I won't disappoint you. And I'm not intrusive. I don't want to interfere. I'll never cramp your style. And above all, I'm tolerant and non-judgmental, remember, I'm the One that said, "Thou shalt not judge." Lifestyles are not important, I look at your heart. I'm not concerned with the details, I only deal with generalities. After all, you don't have to be perfect, just forgiven. What about it? Will you give me a chance?"

Sound familiar? May God help us.

Proverbs 19:5 A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.

-B.W.