

## Five Signs of a “Drifting” Church

Matthew 7:15-20 (ESV)

15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.

18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.

19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

*Apologist Alisa Childers has identified five warning signs that indicate a church is drifting toward so-called “Progressive Christianity”....*

### 1. 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.

#### **Comments you might hear:**

- *The Bible is a human book...*
- *I disagree with the Apostle Paul on that issue...*
- *The Bible condones immorality, so we are obligated to reject what it says in certain places...*
- *The Bible "contains" the word of God...*

Deuteronomy 4:2 (ESV)

2 You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you.

Psalms 119:89 (ESV)

89 Lamedh Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.

Matthew 5:17-19 (ESV)

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

## **2. 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.

Jeremiah 17:9 (ESV)

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Proverbs 14:12 (ESV)

12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

Proverbs 3:5-7 (ESV)

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

### **Comments you might hear:**

- *That Bible verse doesn't resonate with me....*
- *I thought homosexuality was a sin until I met and befriended some gay people....*
- *I just can't believe Jesus would send good people to hell....*

1 Timothy 1:8-11 (ESV)

8 Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully,  
9 understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers,  
10 the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,  
11 in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (ESV)

9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,  
10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.  
11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Revelation 21:8 (ESV)

8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”