

Liberalism in the Church (Intro)

I. **Opening question: What are some major causes of liberalism in the Church today?**

A. Fear of man

i. Proverbs 29:25 says the fear of man is a snare (trap)

1. A snare is deceptively attractive but it entangles you!

2. Examples:

a. Aaron gave into peer pressure (Exodus 32:1-2)

b. Church leaders that overlook the sinful lifestyles within the congregation (couples living together, etc.) or creating a church environment designed to win the approval of man rather than of God.

c. Preachers avoiding topics such as sin, judgment, hell, etc.

i. Old Testament Israel wanted the prophets to speak pleasant things (Isa. 30:9-10)

ii. Paul warned that in later times people will go to teachers that will suit their own passions (2Timothy 4:3-4)

3. Paul spoken against being a man-pleaser (Gal. 1:10)

4. A person who cares about what others think more than what God thinks turns man into an idol—seeking the approval of man rather than of God. This is idolatry!

B. Lack of knowledge (spiritual immaturity)

i. God's people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6)

II. God's desire:

A. To promote edification by instruction through His Word

i. The Bible:

1. It is profitable for doctrine, correction (i.e., correct false views) and training in righteousness (2Timothy 3:16)

2. God looks to those who respect His word (cf. Isaiah 66:2)

3. God's desire is for us to have His word richly dwell within us (Col. 3:16)

ii. Ephesians 4:12-16

1. God's purpose for the church leaders is to bring about maturity in the church by speaking the oracles (words) of God (cf. 1Peter 4:11)

2. A mature person will not be swayed by every wind of doctrine he hears (cf. Eph. 4:16) nor will he be swayed by smooth talk and flattery speech (cf. Rom. 16:17-18).

iii. 1Corinthians 14

1. God lays out basic principles for the assembly

a. Before reading 1Cor. 14, define these key words:

i. Prophecy – An inspired utterance spoken in the native language of the speaker and audience.

ii. Tongue(s) – An inspired utterance spoken in a language never learned by the speaker.

iii. Interpretation – The miraculous ability to interpret those who speak in tongues.

- b. God's assembly is to be:**
 - i. A place where God's people are being built-up, encouraged and consoled through the teaching of God's Word (vv. 1-5, 12, 26)**
 - ii. A place that promotes understanding (vv. 14-17)**
 - iii. A place designed to convict sinners of sin and come to know God (vv. 24-25)**
 - iv. A place where things are done decently and in order (vs. 40)**
- c. Today, even in the Lord's church...**
 - i. The assemblies have become "man-centered" rather than "God-centered" (cf. Romans 12:2)**
 - 1. Instead of the Church impacting the world, the world has impacted the Church!**
 - 2. "Numbers" have become more than the message.**
 - 3. "Show-time" religion has replaced "old-time" religion!**
 - 4. Church leaders have turned to the marketing industry to help draw people rather than relying on the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ!**
 - 5. The stage where Bible preaching once occurred is now a performance stage.**
 - 6. Recent songs have replaced songs that conveyed sound theology.**
 - 7. Doctrine is compromised such as:**
 - a. Bible's teaching on hell, the role of women in the Church, instrumental music, baptism, etc.**
 - 8. When worship services are designed to attract and amuse people, God ceases to be the focus of worship!**

B. Our goal at LICOC

- i. We do not ever want to trivialize the truth nor grieve the Holy Spirit**
- ii. In the next few classes, we will be dealing with these doctrinal issues plaguing the Church before getting into 2John.**