

Marks of a Healthy Church

Session 2

Introduction--Cultural Context--_____ ¹

... Today people _____ to be true simply what they _____ to be true.²

Attempts to “rescue the church from irrelevance”:

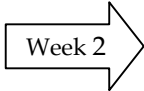
Review

I. Marks of the True Church:

- A. *The Right Preaching of the Word of God.*
- B. *The Pure Administration of the Sacraments.*
- C. *Love for the Brethren.*

II. Marks of a Healthy Church:

A. Expositional Preaching.



B. Biblical Theology. Titus 2:1 ...teach what accords with _____ doctrine.

soundness --

1. The _____ of the Bible’s great story.
Differs from _____ theology (also important)
- Biblical theology traces developing themes _____
- Systematic theology investigates discrete _____ logically.³

2. *Biblical _____ on Sound Doctrine (1 Tim 6:3, 2 Tim 1:13-14; 4:3-4, Titus 1:9)*

3. _____, _____, and _____

“In essentials _____, in non-essentials _____, and in all things _____”

¹ I give an introduction to postmodernism in the “Ambassador Essentials” course. You can find all the notes and handouts at objectivegospel.org

² Dever, Mark, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*, Crossway Books, 2000 p. 44. (emphasis in the original)

³ *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* web site. <http://marks.9marks.org/Mark2/LessonB/Slide1of3>

4. *Developing a Biblical Theology*

- Everyone has a theological grid – It is influenced by many things:

- Everyone’s theological grid is _____

5. *Dealing With Complex/Controversial Doctrines –*

Sound teaching includes a clear commitment to doctrines often _____ yet clearly biblical. If we are to learn the sound doctrine of the Bible, we must come to terms with the doctrines that may be difficult, or even potentially divisive, but that are foundational for understanding God’s work among us.⁴

Self-Test: Which has greater authority? Scripture or ...?

If we are to learn the sound doctrine of the Bible, we must come to terms even with the doctrines that may be difficult or even potentially divisive but that are foundational for our understanding of God. You see, theology is not merely an abstruse, abstract, academic affair. Biblical theology is a mark of a healthy church.⁵

C. ***Biblical Understanding of the Gospel.***

What the gospel is ***not***:

What the gospel is:

... The gospel is, **though you are under the righteous condemnation of God by virtue of your sin and rebellion and your participation in Adam’s original rebellion, God in His mercy and grace has sent His Son to die on your behalf, that you might become the righteousness of God in Him.** That’s where the gospel starts. Not with our response. Until you understand that the gospel is about _____ and His _____, you don’t have a full view of the gospel.⁶

- » _____ with God on His terms
- » _____ – **John 14:6.**
- » To be _____ – **Mark 16:15**
- » To be kept _____ / _____ (fought) for-- **Jude 1:3** (Tim & Titus)

⁴ Dever, Mark, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church – 4th Edition*, Crossway Books, 2005 p. 18

⁵ Dever, *Nine Marks – Expanded Edition*, p. 62

⁶ J. Ligon Duncan’s series on Romans:

<http://www.fpcjackson.org/resources/sermons/romans/romansvol1to2/romans01a.htm>.

D. Biblical Understanding of Conversion.

When I speak of an understanding of conversion, I'm speaking of _____ *it is* and *how to* _____ *its fruits*...

What the conversion is not: (each of these are extremely dangerous errors)

1. _____ *a* _____ – Romans 10:9
2. _____ / _____ *a* _____
 - can give someone a _____ sense of security.
 - “the unchurched” –
 - Faithful membership in a body of believers is a _____ of conversion.
3. _____ *your behavior* –

What the conversion is:

1. *A work of* _____ – ... something that is done _____ you by _____.
2. *Evidenced by* _____ and _____ – “_____ graces.”
Repent – “_____” (O.T. Hebrew) or “_____” (N.T. Greek)
 - » _____ by God (**Acts 17:30**--implies responsibility of man to respond)
 - » _____ of God (**2 Timothy 2:25b**--implies sovereignty of God in salvation)
 - » _____ by God (**John 6:44**)

“*can*” (δύναμαι *dunamai* - to be able, to have power)

“*draws*” (ἔλκω *helko* - to _____) --to woo?

Every appearance in the Greek NT: **John 18:10; 21:6,11; Acts 16:19; 21:30; James 2:6**

John 6:44 No one *can* come to me unless the Father who sent me *draws* him.

John 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will *draw* all people to myself."

Does your Biblical Theology have room for both doctrines? The *sovereignty of God* and the *responsibility of man* are both clearly taught in Scripture. Work through these questions:

- » Do I subject _____ to my (fallen) _____, or vice versa?
- » Am I _____ or _____?

E. *Biblical Understanding of Evangelism.*

1. What the evangelism is not:

- a. _____/_____
- b. *Simply* _____ *an* _____
- c. "lifestyle evangelism" --
- d. _____ *for those with particular* _____ *or* _____

2. What the evangelism is:

"To evangelize is to present Christ Jesus to sinful men in order that through the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as the Savior, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His Church."⁷

--J. I. Packer

^{ESV} **2 Corinthians 4:1** Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.² But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing.⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- a. *Telling the* _____ - (v. 2— ... but by the open statement of the truth)
- Not to pursue false conversions
- b. *Telling the truth* _____ - (v. 1— we do not lose heart.)
- c. *Telling the truth with* _____ - (v. 2— renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways... refuse to practice cunning.)
- d. *Telling the truth with* _____ - (v. 2— refuse to ... tamper with God's word.)
- e. *Telling the truth to the* _____ - (v. 2— we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God)
- f. *Telling the truth* _____ - (v. 5— For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord.)

A healthy church will have not only a biblical understanding of evangelism, but also have a _____ for it.

⁷ *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, J.I. Packer p. 40,37-38