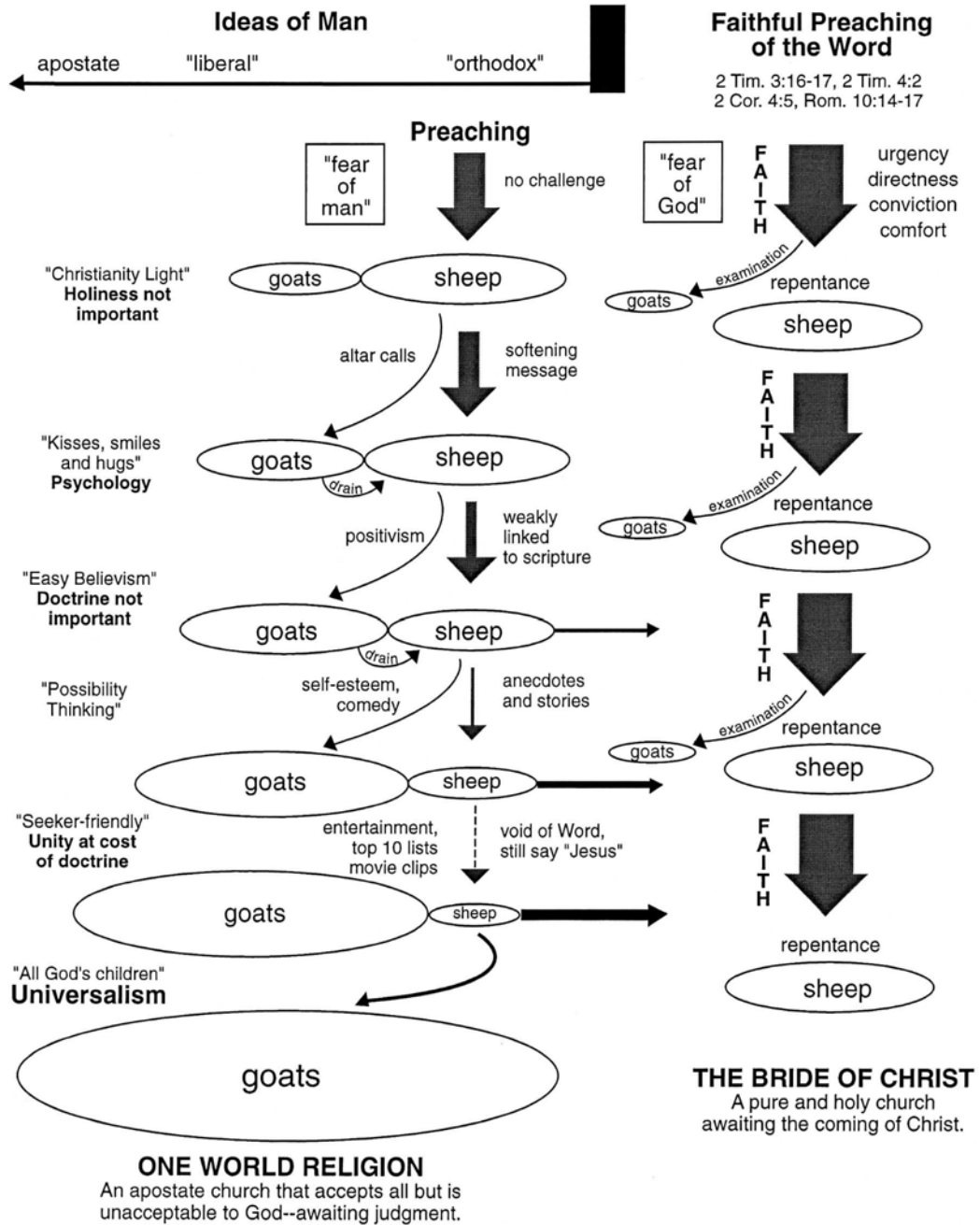


THE APOSTASY...

In the latter times some shall fall away from the faith... 1 Tim. 4:1



God's Breath or Man's Breath? John 7:10-18
November 7, 2004

Exegetical point: *When truly teaching the doctrine of Jesus Christ, one will always glorify God and not man, but he who speaks from and about man seeks his own glory.*

Homiletical point: *How may we discern whether one's doctrine consists of the words of men or the words of God?*

I. **Introduction: Jesus goes to Jerusalem – in God's way, at God's time and for God's purpose**

Proposition: *The techniques, practices and teachings of man has replaced God's methodology in the church today.*

II. **Jesus the prophet** – Exegesis of John 7:10-16

- A. Jesus purpose in going to the Feast
- B. The effect of Jesus' teaching - Division
- C. Jesus teaches by God's authority
- D. How does one become convicted of Truth?
 - 1. Not by human arguments
 - 2. Through the foolishness of the message preached
 - a. I Cor 1:21-25
 - 3. Not the emotional manipulation of human words
 - a. I Cor 2:5
 - 4. Not by "accepting Christ" at an "altar call"
 - a. John 1:13
 - b. I Cor 2:14
 - 5. By the God-breathed Word – 2 Tim 3:16

III. **An Historical Perspective: How man's breath has replaced God's Breath in the church**

- A. The definition of revival prior to the 1800s
- B. Christianity's challenge by "enlightened thinking"
- C. The *ministry* of the church replaced by the *mission*
- D. Revival redefined
- E. Making regeneration as easy as possible

1. The mission of Charles Finney
 - a. The “new measures”
 - b. His doctrine
 2. *New Haven Theology*
 - a. A response to *Unitarianism*
 - b. A ‘palatable’ form of *Calvinism*
- F. Tracing the effects of this theology to modern evangelism
1. The use of altar call
 2. The rise of “easy-believism”
- G. Headed toward apostasy: The condition of the modern church (see chart)

IV. **Who is to blame? How could this happen?**

- A. “Self-interest” – an observation from de Tocqueville
1. Pastors are just going with the flow
 2. Turning aside to myths – 2 Timothy 4:1-4
- B. John 7:17 – Only those in God’s can discern doctrine
1. Apart from examination and repentance we cannot know that we are in God’s will
 2. Much of the church has forgotten how to repent

V. **Conclusion: John 7:18 *How may we discern whether one’s doctrine consists of the words of men or the words of God?***

- A. Is the focus of the message man or God?
- B. Does he speak about himself more than Christ?
- C. Does the minister accept praise for the message?
- D. Can he truthfully say with the apostle, “*We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord*” (2 Cor. 4:5)?
- E. Is there boasting about the church?
- F. Does the word preached produce lasting fruit?
- G. Is it ‘hot air’ or a refreshing life-giving breath?