

7 Signs Your Pastor Is Preaching Heresy

Not long ago, it was reported that prominent Protestant pastor Michael A. Walrond Jr. of Harlem's 10,000-member First Corinthian Baptist Church now advocates a pluralist belief that there are many roads to God and salvation.

Among other things, "'People take many paths to God,' he argued, noting that he personally celebrates the paths others take in finding Him—even if that path does not involve faith in Jesus," The Christian Post reports.

The same article says:

"In 2008, a Pew Research Center Study found that more than half of all American Christians believe that at least some non-Christian faiths can lead to salvation. Nearly a decade later, a new study has shown that even among the most traditional Christian groups, significant minorities are also rejecting God as described in the Bible."

Of course, this downward trend away from biblical Christianity should alarm every true Christ-follower! The fact that many so-called Christian seminaries eventually digressed away from their original fidelity to Scripture and evolved into propagating a form of universalism (the belief that Jesus saved every human on the cross, irrespective of whether they believe in Him or not) and pluralism (that there are many roads to God not just through Jesus) beginning since the early days of Harvard and Yale divinity schools (to appease and accommodate the prevailing intellectual climate and culture) is one of the root causes of this growing rot in mainline churches.

The good news—according to this same Pew Research reported above—is that more than 90 percent of historically black and

evangelical churches still believe in the God of the Bible. However, there are troubling signs that many young evangelical pastors are trending towards pluralism, as more and more theological institutions they learn from capitulate to a form of universalism.

Whether a pastor or church actually makes a strong statement or not (I'm sure Michael Walrond has been hinting at his pluralistic tendencies for years before his recent public overture toward it) is not the point of this article as much as it is to help a believer discern if their pastor and or church is sliding down this heretical slippery slope. (Since Jesus said He is the only way to the Father, as cited in John 14:6, the stakes are high, and the importance of this subject cannot be overstated.)

The following are seven signs your pastor advocates a form of pluralism or universalism, which is heretical:

1. He has taught that there are many roads to God and salvation.

Although I believe it is true that there may be strands of truth in most major religions like Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and the like—in and of themselves, there is not sufficient grace for eternal life if a person falls short of faith in Christ alone for salvation. That being said, if your pastor ever says something like “Every religion is equal” and or “God can be found in every religion” or “every religion has grains of truth” without qualifying his statement and or making sure he follows said statement by making it clear only faith in Jesus is sufficient for salvation, my advice is that you sit down with your pastor and demand a clearer explanation before continuing to attend that church.

While it is true that all roads lead to God (see Rom. 11:36), not all roads lead to salvation and eternal life.

2. He only teaches on the love of God.

I would be suspicious of any pastor who never preaches that people need to repent, turn from sin or face divine consequences (I'm not saying to preach fire and brimstone every week, but the whole counsel of God has to be preached throughout the year). Scripture clearly teaches that there is a severe penalty for unrepentant sin (Rom. 6:23).

3. He teaches that all religions are equal.

Any pastor who makes it seem as though all religions are equal or are to be equally respected should be suspect, in my opinion. While we should respect all people irrespective of their religious beliefs, that's not the same as treating all religions as equal.

The religious ideologies of communist atheism, radical Islam, Nazism, the KKK and the like are not as noble as other religions like Judaism and cannot even compare to the way of Jesus and His apostles as taught in the New Testament.

4. He teaches that all persons will eventually go to heaven.

Any pastor that teaches "ultimate reconciliation" has already begun bringing his congregation into the theological genre of pluralism and universalism.

5. The church takes no moral stand on critical cultural issues.

Any pastor who only preaches encouraging, positive messages and never applies the biblical ethical standard to the controversial issues of the day like abortion, sexual identity, biblical marriage and gender may be only a few steps away from espousing pluralism. The reason I say this is because their gospel of appeasement is historically the root reason why many Christian leaders and institutes eventuated towards pluralism.

6. The Bible is not honored as the highest authority for faith

and life.

Any pastor who purports that other works of literature and or religious, philosophical or scientific writings or books are equal to or superior to Scripture is most likely a pluralist or universalist. Think twice before committing yourself to such a church who employs such a pastor.

7. Sermons are emotionally based rather than Bible based.

If a pastor rarely preaches biblically sound messages from a text of Scripture and merely relies on oratory skill or rhetoric, which excites the emotion but fails to holistically feed the soul, then said church has sand as its foundation (Matt. 7:24-27).

Such a preacher has an emotionally alive church that lacks biblical discernment (Heb. 5:12-14), which can easily lead members down the road to pluralism or universalism if the pastor so desires.

Finally, Jesus warned His followers about following false prophets (Matt. 7:15), as did the apostle Peter when he predicted that false teachers would arise that will secretly introduce destructive heresies, and that many will follow them. Because of them the way of truth will be maligned (2 Pet. 2:1, 2).

May the sincere Christ-follower study the Scriptures and be more shaped by the Word of God than the words of any man apart from Jesus Christ.