

# Common Sayings

By Scott Huckaby

8/10/2025



## **For Discussion: Biblical Authority Has Been Undermined: Can You Recognize Liberal Or Progressive Theology?**

(Ken Ham; harbingersdaily.com; May 10, 2023)

<https://harbingersdaily.com/biblical-authority-has-been-undermined-can-you-recognize-liberal-or-progressive-theology/>

### **What is progressive theology?**

Progressive theology attempts to merge liberal values with Christianity. Such merging gratifies left-wing convictions but does so at the expense of sound biblical theology.

Titus 1:9 – [We are exhorted to hold] *fast the faithful word... that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*

### **What does it mean to be progressive in social and political contexts?**

One who favors implementing liberal ideals, often through social reform. This includes promoting LGBTQIA+ causes, safeguarding limitless access to abortion, and demanding action on climate change.

### **How does the culture drive people to embrace progressive ideology?**

Progressives often consider people who disagree with their values as hateful, close-minded, fearful, anti-science, racist, sexist, and bigoted. The desire to avoid these labels drives many people to accept progressive theology, compromising their faith in the Bible.

### **How does progressive theology regard Scripture?**

Progressive theology replaces Scripture as the standard for faith and practice with modern liberal ideals like tolerance, relativism, and sustainability.

- Progressive theology enthrones subjective personal feelings. As a result, love, compassion, and justice—as progressive theology defines those terms—don’t exist alongside truth, righteousness, and orthodoxy, but override and supplant them.

Progressive theology criticizes the Bible as outdated, patriarchal, and oppressive. The compromises progressive theology makes are so extensive that its adherents illustrate Paul’s warning:

2 Timothy 4:3 – *For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions (ESV).*

### **What statements indicate progressive theology?**

- Humans are born innocent, without sin; their environment caused them to sin.
- The Bible “contains” the Word of God.
- The Bible is not a book of science.
- Genesis is a book of poetry
- The creation account of Genesis is myth... it is a type of myth that teaches truth.
- It’s not what Genesis says that’s important, but what it means.
- That fossil is millions of years old.
- The miracles of the Bible can be explained.
- Love Wins (title of a book by Rob Bell)

### **Does the Bible only “contain” the Word of God?**

No, it is the inerrant Word of God...

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

God is Almighty enough to have accurately given His Word to His people and preserved it through time even using His flawed scribes.

1 Thess 2:13 – *you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God*

### **Why is a correct view of Genesis so important?**

If you don’t recognize Genesis as the God-inspired Word of history, you’ll have doubts about the rest of Scripture...

Psalm 11:3 – *If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?*

God told Moses how He brought about the creation the same way He gave Him the Law... by direct revelation.

## Are the following common sayings, biblical or not?

### **"God helps those who help themselves"**

Originally from an Aesop's fable. When it comes to salvation, we can do nothing to help ourselves...

Romans 5:6, 8 – *For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Indeed, trying to do anything independent of God is a fool's endeavor...

Jeremiah 17:5 – *Thus says the LORD, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength. The only things of value we can accomplish is allowing God to work through us..."*

John 15:5 – *I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

### **"Cleanliness is next to godliness."**

Originated as an ancient Babylonian and Hebrew proverb, became popular during the Victorian era after being revived by Sir Francis Bacon and John Wesley.

But Jesus exhorts us to worry more about the sin in our hearts than the dirt on our hands...

Matthew 15:19-20 – *out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.*

I remember this succinct summary statement, particularly when eating something sketchy...

Matthew 15:11 – [it is] *Not what goes into the mouth [that] defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man*

True cleansing only comes from God...

1 John 1:9 – *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

### **"Hate the sin, love the sinner."**

This is a loose quote of something Mahatma Gandhi wrote in 1929. Augustine expressed a similar thought back in AD 424: "With love for mankind and hatred of sins."

There is a biblical principle backing this up...

Jude 1:22-23 – *on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*

Loving others is a biblical mandate... even our enemies (Matthew 5:43-44). We are to hate sin—even our own.

Psalms 97:10 – *You who love the Lord, hate evil!*

### **Why has the idea of "hating sin" come under fire from the culture today?**

More and more people define themselves by their sin and resent the guidelines God has given us in His Word.

### **"Money is the root of all evil."**

This is a common misconception with an easy fix...

1 Timothy 6:10 – *For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil*

Money is not good or bad, and being wealthy is not a sin; Job was wealthy and described as a man who was "blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil" (Job 1:1).

- Loving money, which in the Greek is "avarice" and implies an emotional affection, is the root of all sorts of evil as the desire to accumulate wealth is placed above God and others.

### **"This too shall pass."**

This is actually a misinterpretation of a line from "The Lament of Deor," an Old English poem.

Several verses in the Bible remind us that our lives and, indeed, heaven and earth will pass away (Matt 24:35).

2 Cor 4:17 – *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*

But while we can find comfort knowing that our earthly sorrows are temporary, we're still called to rejoice in our trials, knowing that they will lead to endurance and sanctification (James 1:2-4).

### **"We all worship the same God"**

The God revealed in Scripture is the true God. All others are fake and imposters...

John 8:23-24 – *You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.*

Jesus is the Door to salvation. Trusting in His provision for eternal salvation is the only way to have eternal life:

John 14:6 – *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

Thinking that there are multiple paths to heaven is error:

Acts 4:12 – *there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*

### **"Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words"**

This saying is often attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, but there's no evidence he actually said it. There is an element of biblical truth in the statement:

Matthew 5:16 – *let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

People are watching us and God can use how we conduct ourselves to attract them to Him. But this is misleading in thinking that it is not necessary to actually use words in sharing the gospel...

Romans 10:13-14 – *for whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*

### **"Idle hands are the devil's workshop"**

Though the statement is not found verbatim in the Bible, its roots in Scripture...

2 Thessalonians 3:11 – *We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies*

By not using their time productively, these people were tempted to meddle in other people's business and stand in the way of their progress (see also 1 Timothy 5:13).

- These idlers and busybodies were wasting time that could have been used to help others. In essence, their lack of activity was leading them into sin.

Idleness is not the same as rest. The Bible advises people to rest, and taking breaks from work is good. By "idle" we mean "lazy" or doing nothing when you should be doing something.

Proverbs 18:9 – *One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys*

### **"Spare the rod, spoil the child"**

This is actually a simplified statement of a biblical principle:

Proverbs 13:24 – *He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*

### **"We're all God's children"**

While it is true that God created everyone physically, those who He has birthed spiritually are His true children...

John 1:12 – *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.*

### **"It is important to love yourself"**

This saying is unbiblical psychological mumbo-jumbo. No where do we find this in the Bible because we naturally love ourselves. Selfishness is our nature. That's why Scripture assumes that we love ourselves:

Matthew 19:19 – *You shall love your neighbor as yourself*

### **"To thine own self be true"**

This is from William Shakespeare's Hamlet. We don't know if Shakespeare was a Christian, but he certainly wrote when the culture was largely dominated by Christian values.

Christians should model God who does not lie (Hebrews 6:18). If we are to not lie to others, we are certainly not to lie to ourselves...

Isaiah 1:18 – *"Come now, and let us reason together," says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."*

However, if someone takes "to thine own self be true" as his motto apart from the over-arching Christian worldview and biblical moral framework, it could become an excuse for almost any kind of bad behavior:

- "I don't love my wife anymore, but I do love my secretary. I need to be true to myself."
- "I was born a man, but I feel like a woman. I need to be true to myself."

"Being true to myself" without any context could mean that I will act sinfully or irresponsibly because it is what I really feel like doing.

### **What applications do we see from this discussion?**

- Progressive theology doesn't recognize the inerrancy of Scripture and is a symptom of apostasy.
- Having a correct view of Scripture is foundational, an essential salvation issue.
- Common sayings can sometimes be helpful but may also be misleading; spiritual discernment is necessary!