

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. (Act 8:35)

I want to talk a little bit today about what Christianity is, as an entry point to discussing our being “fishers of men”.

As Tim has been telling us for some time now, there is a transition coming, if not underway, and it should be a topic of great interest to all of us. As I have been doing my own studying on the matters related to the return of our Savior, I have encountered a commonality across many expositors and writings that I believe is mis-guided and contribute to Satan’s making the “sky red” as it were.

Many expositors have no reservation about pointing out Catholicism’s idolatry and some will go so far as to plainly say that Catholicism is not Christianity. These same men, though, fail to distinguish Christianity from the off shoots of Catholicism born from the Reformation. This hit home especially as I was reading from Arthur Pink’s “The Redeemer’s Return”. This is not unique to his analysis or remarks; I am using his writing as a fair representation of the point. I’ve provided three examples from early in the book:

“...so little place is given in the modern pulpit to the exposition of eschatology, and so generally is the daily reading of the Bible neglected by those in the pew, that **it is an easy matter to persuade the average church-goer** that the subject of the Second Coming of Christ is impractical and one that had better be left alone.”

“Christians of every shade of religious belief are agreed that there is an imperative need for our Lord to return again.”

“...an ever increasing number of the saints have given studious attention to the prophetic portions of the Word, until, today, **in every section of Christendom**, there are companies of believers who are eagerly waiting for the Shout of the Lord which shall call them away from this earth to be for ever with Him. It is our humble desire to unite with these witnesses of God in testifying that the Coming of the Lord ‘draweth nigh’.”

I want to be clear with you – I don’t object to his overall analysis or find major fault with the book. In fact I recommend its reading.

I don’t really understand how he can come to the conclusion there are people just falling over themselves studying the return of Christ (even back in 1918), but that’s not my primary consideration. The issue I primarily have is with the notion that these post-Reformation **denominations** are any more Christian than Catholicism. This idea that there are “Christian shades of religious belief” is a falsehood.

If that seems a bit extreme, I apologize, but I encourage some critical thought on the subject. These supposedly Christian denominations – whether it be Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian and yes, even Baptists – whether Southern, Reformed, Independent, Primitive, Peculiar or others – I contend are not Christian. A church centered on Christ doesn't need these labels and will not align their position of faith to any of them. Now, you might be thinking “what the heck? We call ourselves Baptists! Has he lost his mind?” That's a legitimate question and I want to make sure everyone in this house, who hears this recording or reads these words understands my point.

The use of 'Baptist' in our name does not in any way, shape or form dictate or explicitly define in some limiting way what we believe or do. There are many Baptists in this nation and across the globe that I would not call brother if they were the last person on the planet, because they are more interested in defending some principal of their **denomination** – not the Gospel – and will do so at the expense of keeping the faith. There is no concord with Belial in our doctrines or our practices. Our assembly is independent and holds no allegiance to any besides Christ. To be super blunt about it, I am not a Baptist; I am a Christian. I follow Christ and no man, organization or group. I am not beholden to calling myself a Baptist; I will defend my Christianity to the cross if I must. The label 'baptist' has a long history of being attached to people I doctrinally agree with – that carries absolutely no weight of importance to me. What I care about in those people is what they believed and how they acted. John Baptist didn't label himself 'a Baptist', he saw himself as Christ's follower, which is wrapped up in his words at John 3

“Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.” (Joh 3:28-30)

So I don't put any stock in our name in this regard. I am not proposing here today to change it, either. Don't think I'm saying that. I'm saying don't put any store or stock in it as a defining characteristic – it's fleshly.

To make this point in a broader sense – I am saying that there are no denominations of Christianity. There is no Catholicism and Protestantism with its many variations. **There is only Christianity and idolatry, i.e, everything else passing as organized religion; these denominations are in the same camp as Buddhism, Hinduism, Paganism, Catholicism, Wiccanism, Great Spaghetti Monsterism, etc.**

The great flaws of the Reformation and many of the “Church Fathers” found in its wake are two-fold. First, many believed and espoused that the Catholic abomination could

be reformed (thus the name), as though there was some legitimate claim it had on defining Christianity. Suffice it to say for today that Catholicism **never was** Christianity. The second flaw is that the opinions of various men engaged in the Spiritual warfare of the Reformation outweighed the simple and direct Word of God. I mean no disrespect to Luther, Calvin, Wycliffe, Tyndale or others who were all learned men in Scripture. Nor to Spurgeon, Gill, Watts, Henry, and those others who followed and largely continued the work. But they are all men.

These divisions of denomination and faction all come from the opinions, pontifications and disagreements of these men – Paul directly addresses this

“Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1Co 1:12-13)

These denominations are no different than the Pharisees and Sadducees. While they may have had origins in truth or some specific doctrinal clarity, at the end of the day, Christ’s Bride is one body of believers **all believing the same things.**

Going back to the Word keeps it simple.

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism,” (Eph 4:5)

There is ONE church, and that church follows Christ, her head. That doesn’t mean there is only one body of believers in the whole earth. We know that hasn’t been the case in the past. There were believers at Ephesus, and Corinth, Jerusalem and Rome, all extant together. We hope that there are others today, extant with us. I’ve got no evidence that there are others, but I have a lot of hope that there are. The common thread is that every one of those bodies of believers has no authoritative link or association with anyone but Christ. They are **His** followers. He is **their** head.

To hold on to some idea that there are “shades of Christian belief” is, I believe, a false doctrine. Christianity isn’t a smorgasbord of varying opinions and degrees of belief, where we can all just make up our own system of worship and set of beliefs and call it “Christianity”. You don’t eat 2 all beef patties and call yourself a faithful Hindu. But that’s **precisely** what “Christianity” does. Don’t like baptism by immersion? There’s lots of “denominations” for you to go join that promote sprinkling or pouring “baptism”. Don’t like one loaf, one cup? Take your pick of “churches” in the Yellow Pages to find one that perverts that blessed ordinance with some nice Ritz and Welch’s. Don’t like body discipline? None of that exists in a single so-called Christian church I know of. Don’t like the idea of women staying out of the pulpit and having long hair, covering their heads because of the angels? There’s lots of modern “churches” spouting about all their “Christianity” who abhor these Scriptural concepts. Don’t believe unity of the spirit is possible, don’t want restrictions on fornication, divorce and remarriage or for the love

of GOD, you want a youth pastor who will help your “gender dysphoric youth realize their true self”? There’s roughly 30 pages of Google results in Topeka for you to choose from. None of which is Christian **by definition**.

One! One! One! There are no shades of these things, there are no nuances to them, no variations, and for the love of God, there are no schisms!

“For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.” (1Co 12:24-25)

There is only **one**! Are we tempered together with those who walk in concord with Belial? God forbid! How then can they be of the body of Christ!?! If they are not the body of Christ, how can they be Christians!?!

When all else fails, you have to look at the simplest answer. That answer is these people are not Christian.

Friends, this is not a small matter to consider, and I think it goes beyond a resistance to inter-denominationalism and InterFaith groups. This is a declaration that I think is critical to our faith and the state of the body when our Savior and King returns to take His throne. We must be identifiable as His followers – following no one else. This isn’t about being contrarian, contentious or elevating ourselves in some prideful manner – that we somehow have all the answers, that we’re superior to any other man, somehow less needful of Christ’s salvation. This is about making in our own minds, our hearts and our actions a **distinction**:

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,” (2Co 6:17)

Maybe this is a blinding flash of the obvious, but as the world spirals down further into the darkness of stark rebellion, having a clear understanding of where the battle lines are drawn is important. Consider it this way – if confusion on this matter in these last days is not increasingly going to be the reigning force, how could it be that

“...there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” (Mat 24:24)

Those are not words of some hard-to-understand prophecy. This is a statement delivered by Jesus, the Christ, the Lamb, the Lion of Judah, the Son of God.

This is a fact. There will be false Christs that deceive so effectively that if it were not for the grace of God, the elect would be undone by them.

How could it be that there could be false Christs – plural – if not put forward by false Christians? How can this be if there is not confusion over who Christ is and what it means to *be* Christian? I don't put a lot into the argument some expositors do that this is just the Catholic church putting forward various Christs and deceiving the whole world. I don't claim to have some deep insight here, but it seems to me that there is a connection between some 2.5 billion false Christians all pimping Xmas and sin all day every day, and false Christs. I'm not predicting something specific; I'm calling attention to a thing we should be keenly watchful of and include in our preachments as much as possible. These houses of worship we stand outside of – and not just the Catholic or Jewish ones – are. not. Christian. We must be careful not to become like them.

How do we know there aren't, as Pink implies, true Christians in these houses of idolatry? Well, we don't – which is why we preach!!!! It is why I believe standing outside these houses of worship is some of the most important work that we do in our public ministry. Not just “*convincing* [confuting, admonishing] *the gainsayer*” (Tit 1:9) for the sake of defending the Gospel, but for the sake of that one sheep who may earnestly believe they follow Christ when they go into one of these whorehouses.

Which leads me to our duty to be fishers:

“And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” (Mat 4:18-19)

I do not believe that this was strictly an Apostolic assignment, nor is this strictly a duty of Elders. I believe that this applies to all Christians as they are gifted to perform this act. Like any gift, some may be better at this than others, but it is fair, I think, to call being a fisher of men a Christian duty.

This is one of the key tenets of all these fake Christians, that they are fishers “saving souls”. This is a great heresy and a false doctrine promoted by **all** these “denominations” that actually denies Christ. Let us consider what fishing for men is.

There are three key parts of this short commandment:

1. The following
2. The making
3. The fishing

The metaphor used here is simple yet powerful. It had immediate connection for Peter and Andrew but is supremely understandable even for us. For these two men, it was

their livelihood to draw fish from the sea. They had to understand how to do it effectively and efficiently in order to be successful enough at it to make a living. It was an impactful and meaningful metaphor for them.

Fake Christianity has treated this elegant metaphor as though it is a casual,



Example of Icthus or Jesus Fish



recreational thing being discussed, making merchandise of the unscriptural and idolatrous ictus fish, meant to symbolize their Christian devotion to fishing for men. They put it on cars, wear necklaces of it, and of course like

everything mix it with the fag pride rainbow. These fake Christians make prideful claims about all the souls they've saved and deny the plainest doctrinal facet of the metaphor – that of predestination. This is not a casual thing.

For our actions to be considered “fishing for men” we have to deal with the first key part of the sentence –

1. the following

The words are clear, simple and unambiguous.

“FOLLOW ME”

Following doesn't require you to think great thoughts. The word used here means exactly what it means in the English. Every school child plays “follow the leader”, and it is a simple proposition – you don't set the agenda, you don't set the path, you get behind the leader and go where He goes and do what He commands, emulating Him to the best of your ability.

If you're going to call yourself a fisher of men, you better be following Jesus. You better have a good line of sight on what that looks like and what it doesn't. Jesus addresses this very plainly

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Mat 7:21-23)

And

*“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and **do not the things which I say?**” (Luk 6:46)*

Who is it out there crying “Lord, Lord” if not these fake Christians? It isn’t the Buddhists or the Hindus! It’s not the Muslims! They all outright deny Him! It’s the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Amish, the 7th Day Adventists, the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Unitarians, the Lutherans and “Church of Christ” devotees saying His name and not doing the things He says! I summarize what it means to follow Him thusly:

- **Keep His commandments** – all of them, don’t pick and choose. That means don’t murder – including your unborn babies; no sex outside one man, one woman, one life – no fags, no adultery, no divorce and remarriage; don’t steal – anything; don’t lie – about anything; no other gods before Him – fake hippie Jesus, the trees, yourself, anything!; no idols – of any kind like crosses and Jesus fish and your own image; don’t covet – be content with the things God has given you; remember the sabbath – Christ is our sabbath, our rest, treat Him as such; honour your mother and father – with obedience and respect; don’t take the Lord’s name in vain – don’t say things like “God loves everyone”; loving your neighbor – sharing the truth with them at every opportunity and not suffering sin upon them. Those are His basic commandments. Keep them.
- **Treat the Bible as His Word** – not some menu you can choose from and decide to adhere to when you want, or just some culturally malleable pamphlet of “truths”.
- **Seek the glory of God, not ourselves** – put aside all pride and walk in humility as Christ did, seeking to do all things for the glory of God.
- **Look to the betterment of others** – in our preachments, our daily interactions, our thinking, everything. Look to serve others to their benefit, not be served.
- **Preach His gospel in its entirety** – that means you’ve got to make sin sinful, you’ve got to be true to His message and deliver it faithfully. You don’t just get to go around saying “death, burial and resurrection” and call that preaching. Or just go on about the “redemptive power of Jesus” and call that preaching as though the lost see a need for redemption! Christ and His Apostles didn’t do that. They preached an unfiltered, unmitigated, complete message.

Now, there are probably other things that belong on the list. These are broad strokes I’m after here. Following is paramount, so if I missed something, go get after doing it.

Likewise, there are some broad behavioral strokes that indicate you do **not** follow Jesus:

- Being or supporting sodomites – all flavors including this current tranny thing
- Promoting or being a fornicator or adulterer
- Killing of the unborn or support of it
- Celebrating pagan feast days like Xmas

- Lying about what Jesus did or said
- Persecuting His actual followers
- Denying His Godliness
- Not obeying His commandments

Again, these are broad strokes that could be greatly expanded on. If you're doing these things, you aren't following Christ

“Following” is the necessary precedent to

2. the making

The words are, “*I will make you*”. This isn't “Jesus needs you to take the first step”, it's a simple order of operations he details. Jesus doesn't “need” us to do anything. None of this is by our own will or our own power.

This is so blessedly simple – the fishing of men is not of our own capability, no more than any other gift. It is a work of God in us, after we submit to following Him. It is a work we must undertake but it is in vain if we are not **made** fishers.

This flies in the face of what fake Christians say about their “missions” and supposed “ministering”. Listen to this explanation of this passage given by an evangelical “church” out of Chicago. Bear in mind this is representative. Lots of these so-called churches have similar words on their websites. They say

“Jesus didn't give these brothers sugary words or bribe them with promises of an easy life; rather He inspired them to work hard to change the world one person at a time”
[July 2 | Disciples Are Fishers of Men | Metro Praise International Church \(mpichurch.org\)](https://www.mpichurch.org)

He didn't say one word about “working hard to change the world one person at a time”. Christ neither implied that they could do something via their own hard work, nor that they were tasked with changing the world! They are commanded to follow Him and Christ will use them as vessels. He wasn't “inspiring”, He was directing action.

Being a fisher is 100% dependent upon Christ working a work in you. Looking at this any other way is akin to saying the light, being commanded to shine, decided to work really hard to push out the darkness by its own will.

Fake Christianity wrests the scriptures (2 Pet 3:16) regarding this, claiming that passages like this from James 5 in conjunction with Christ's words we are examining mean you – you as a member of Adam's race, a fleshly, fallen creature – can save a person's soul.

“Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” (Jas 5:19-20)

Anti-Christians twist these verses and hang on them to justify their pride-riddled position that men have the power to save souls. They twist “convert” and “save” to mean things the context doesn’t support. They use this and our focus passage to justify going into far-off remote places in the earth and bribing the people they find there with wells of water and schools and electricity to say “I believe in Jesus”; when they say those words (which they don’t legitimately understand), these supposed fishers put a notch in their belts like they’re meeting some quota.

The context of these verses make it clear that this is about recovering a brother who has fallen into a sin by helping them to see their error. The word convert here means to return or turn about, do an about face as it were. It presumes a falling away or a backsliding from following the truth. You had to have been there first in order to have fallen away!! James isn’t talking about turning pagans from their paganism. If Christ, the Son of God didn’t accomplish that with His preaching, if it isn’t what the Apostles did with their fishing, how can it mean that for us?

This is one of the prime ways we know this is not Christianity being practiced all around us. It is the very depiction of what we see in Jeremiah:

“I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.” (Jer 23:25-32)

They have stolen His words and use their tongues saying “He saith” when He has **not**.

3. the fishing



The image on this mug does much to depict how wrong the fake Christians are in this matter. Look at how they try to make merchandise out of the Gospel, friends, and see what an insidious thing it is. They make these seemingly innocuous trinkets that are in fact great and horrific lies. The problem here is that the fishing referenced on the mug is bait fishing. To be effective at it, you have to **bait** a hook, cast it into the water, wait for a fish to come

by, be lured in by the bait, have it take the bait, then set the hook with your strength and skill, and ultimately fight the fish to bring it in. It is heavily dependent upon the fisherman's ability and skillfulness, wisdom and strength. It requires a luring in of the target with something shiny and desirable. The only thing not dependent upon the fisherman is there being a fish in the water.

By comparison, the fishing used as the metaphor's source is net casting, which you can see an example of here in this picture. You throw, or "cast" the net. You don't try to



attract fish with shiny things – there is no bait here! You don't jump in and put the fish in the net. You don't know what you're going to draw back in – if anything at all! You work hard to develop the skill to cast the net. You throw it where you believe fish to be – not a mud puddle, but a body of water where fish are known to live. You throw it when you believe you see fish. You cast it and draw it back repeatedly. Sometimes you pull back an empty net,

or something that's not even a fish. Sometimes when you're fishing for mullet you pull back a shark or an octopus – you don't control any of that, you just deal with it when it happens. You're drawing the fish in with the same approach every time.

Fishing for men in this manner is to be fully dependent upon God to make the men available, help us properly form the net, to make the net effective by working in us, and to bring in that which He desires. That might be good men, it might be bad men meant to try you. The drawing in of the net accomplishes His will, and His will alone! His fishermen, having followed Him, will acknowledge and glory in His work being done! This is not a work of our hands or hearts. We are, as I've said many times, vessels or tools used by God to move His timeline and His providence forward. Christians follow!

Here's a good example of how this looks from Scripture:

*"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, **and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and***

many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city.” (Act 8:4-8)

Note this critical detail – Philip “preached Christ unto them”. He didn’t bribe them with anything, he didn’t promise them anything (because he had nothing TO promise), he didn’t preach his personal interpretation of Christ, he didn’t preach a compromise of Christ to accommodate their cultural differences. He preached a direct and simple Christ to them. Some believed. Some didn’t.

Now, you might wonder about the healing and casting out of devils. Was that a trade off? Was that something Philip did here in return? No, he did those things regardless of their belief. The miracles he did were proof points, not where he **started** or some trade for a confession of faith. We don’t have all the gifts Philip did, but we certainly have the **first** one – preaching. We know a little about what that looked like, too, from the same chapter of Acts

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.” (Act 8:35)

The scripture Philip is using to preach Jesus is

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” (Isa 53:7)

Philip (and by extension all the Apostles) was preaching the *whole Bible* – not just little snippets or wrested pieces that sounded attractive to an audience. He wasn’t compromising on what needed preached and he was doing it wherever he found a place to do it. He didn’t try to dictate an outcome; he didn’t even try to so much as influence an outcome – he said the words needful to be said. Words. That’s it. He cast the net and let it fill with what God filled it with.

That’s what it means to be a fisher of men. You cast the net and it fills with what God wills. Jesus didn’t set a quota. He didn’t say “I will make you savers of men” – when He could have! If you get caught up in this argument with a “well, maybe you could look at it that we have to do something so people are saved”, remember He very easily **could have said** “I will make you savers of men”. But that wasn’t the assignment. The assignment was to bring the words to them, i.e., the net, and cast those words before the masses, and He will do the work on the hearts.

“For whosoever shall call upon 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? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How

beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom 10:13-15)

Look closely at that first sentence. What part do we play in a person calling on the name of the Lord? That is between God and His called, not some cut and paste “I call on Jesus” simplistic rote narrative.

We play only a small part as vessels by giving them something to hear!! That’s it. Nothing else. God works the heart through the words, and they will call on Him because they feel the need of Him – they are drawn to Him by the Father (John 6:44).

This is important today, because there is a time when this will change:

*“And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: **for they shall all know me**, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer 31:34)*

Until then, we have to keep casting the net. Not as fake Christians who will tell you how they save and bring people to Jesus; but as yeomen who simply put the words in front of eyes and into ears.

This is the battle ground. False religion puts the power **into the hands of men** and denies the predestination and election of God, denies His very power. That’s how fake Christianity will feed into the whole world worshiping the last Anti-Christ, by confusing and muddying the water. By making the sky red. By making Christianity something it is not. By denying the power of God and trying to see that promise of Satan in the garden made real

“...ye shall be as gods...”

Let **us** endeavor to maintain our humble status as fishers of men, not wresting this job to be something it is not and declaring plainly and boldly what it is. Let us touch not the unclean thing, conform not to the world’s free-willism and declare boldly what Christianity is through our words and deeds, all with the hope of being declared good and faithful servants at that last day (Luke 19:17).