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False Teachings in Church Are Not Limited to the New Testament Era

By Freddy Davis

Dr. Jon Paul Sydnor is a professor of theology and religious studies at Emmanuel College in Boston, Massachusetts. Additionally, he is theologian-in-residence at Grace Community (also in Boston), and a podcaster at The Progressive Sacred. He studied theology at the University of Virginia, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Boston College where he earned his PhD in theology and theological studies.

It should already be obvious, but his theological point of view falls squarely in a category that can be referred to as “liberal theology.” His particular form of liberal theology seems to fall into the arena of “liberation theology” (as indicated by his particular interest in studying liberation theology and feminist theology, as seen below). In his work, Sydnor practices what is referred to as “comparative theology.” That is a theological discipline that involves studying multiple religious traditions to gain a deeper understanding of one's own. In his case, he particularly studies Hinduism and Buddhism, and states that he is attempting to produce a new Christian theology that is “informed by a broadened religious conversation.

Sydnor's self-stated academic interests include comparative theology, aesthetic theory, theology of religion, theology of religions, interreligious cognition, liberation theology, feminist theology, and world Christian theology. He shares his insights with his students as he teaches world religions.

Recently he wrote an article that was published in the *Daily Kos*. It is informative to know the perspective of this publication, as well. The *Daily Kos* is a digital media platform that publishes material that is of interest to Progressives. In addition to providing a platform for Progressives to write articles, they also have an “activism team” that provides tools like petitions, letter writing campaigns, and information about organized protests. Their purpose in providing these tools is to help its readers

take their progressive message to the streets. They are also active in promoting, raising money, and doing polling for progressive political candidates all over the country.

To be clear, Progressivism is a Marxist ideology. Communist Marxism advocates for tactics that promote a very rapid overthrow of capitalism. This does not necessarily include violence, but violence is certainly on the table. Progressive Marxism has the same end goal in mind as Communism, but looks to accomplish the goal of overthrowing capitalism over time (in a progressive manner).

Marxism is generally conceived of in the realm of politics and economics, but the underlying philosophical beliefs can be applied in virtually any arena. In recent years, one of those arenas is in the church. It is noteworthy that the various forms of liberation theology (black liberation theology, feminist liberation theology, Native American liberation theology, etc.) are actually not based on biblical teachings at all. Rather they begin with Marxist philosophy, then select various Bible passages out of context to promote their Marxist beliefs. In this way, they claim to be Christian, when in fact they are anything but.

Sydnor published an article in the *Daily Kos*, entitled, *Traditional Concepts of God Impede Progress: We Need a Progressive Concept of God*. (You can read the entire article at: <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2025/1/12/2296579/-Traditional-Concepts-of-God-Impede-Progress-We-need-a-progressive-concept-of-God>.) This article is full of doublespeak and deliberately “fuzzy” language, but that tends to be the way Progressives roll. He begins his article like this:

A friendly note to all Daily Kos readers. This essay was posted to Street Prophets, a progressive religious community on Daily Kos. As a blogger there, I am a progressive like you, only from a Christian perspective.

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In support of progressivism, I am trying to articulate a progressive Christian political vision. After all, no progressive leaders will be elected without the progressive religious vote. As I argue for progress from a Christian perspective, I am in no way asserting the superiority of faith to atheism, or Christianity to any other worldview. I am just trying to advance humanity from my own particular perspective. I think that God prefers kind atheists to mean Christians. My hope is that we can all cooperate across worldviews to create a more just, inclusive, and peaceful world. Thank you.

First of all, it is noteworthy that Sydnor feels the need to defend the fact that he is a Progressive to non-religious Progressives. As a Marxist ideology, Progressivism is inherently atheistic. It seems that he is concerned that non-religious progressives will not accept him into their ranks because he claims to be a Christian. And his concern is actually legitimate.

The truth is, “Christian Progressivism” is not legitimate. While he claims to be a Christian, Sydnor does not base his beliefs on Christianity. His ideological foundation is actually Marxism. The fact that he is also trying to create a “new theology” that includes beliefs associated with Buddhism and Hinduism proves definitively that his foundational beliefs are not Christian. Neither Marxism nor Buddhism and Hinduism acknowledge an objectively real, personal God. They literally contradict biblical beliefs. Who knows why he still wants to claim to be Christian, but for some reason he does.

The ultimate goal of Progressivism is to create utopia on earth using political and economic means. This is the best they can do because they believe that this world is all that exists – precisely the opposite of what the Bible teaches. So trying to blend Christianity with Progressivism is impossible. Something has to give, and Sydnor has given up Christian beliefs to accommodate his progressive ideology.

But besides the contradictions between Progressivism and biblical teachings, what about the “Christian” side of the beliefs he claims? What is Sydnor trying to say?

Let’s start with his characterization of God. He says, “Traditionally, Christianity has deemed God to be infinite. We will deem God to be an ever-increasing infinity.” So, exactly what does he mean by that? Here is his explanation.

We may deny infinity the capacity to increase. Infinity is, after all, infinite. But first, the divine majesty cannot be limited by our human logic. Second, work by mathematicians on infinity suggests that it can increase. In the 1920s, David Hilbert pointed out that if you had an infinite hotel with an infinite number of rooms, and the hotel was full, then it could still accommodate one more guest, if each guest simply moved one room number up (1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 4, etc.), thereby leaving the first room open for the new guest. So, infinity can increase by one, so long as there is movement.

But Hilbert also points out that infinity can increase by infinity. That is, if a hotel with an infinite number of rooms, all full, were to be visited by an infinitely long bus of new guests, then the hotel could accommodate all of them by having each current guest move from their room number n to room number $2n$ (1 to 2, 2 to 4, 3 to 6, etc.), thereby leaving an infinite number of rooms free for the infinite number of new guests, so long as there is movement. Hilbert then went on to prove that any infinite hotel could accommodate an infinite number of buses with an infinite number of new guests, but that math is over my head.

First of all, this example is absurd. Infinity already includes anything that could ever be added. And using this logic to say that God is an ever increasing infinity is making an assertion that Sydnor has no way of even addressing. He has already said, “the divine majesty cannot be limited by our human logic.” Yet here he is making a claim about God using only human logic. It is just senseless.

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So why does he try to make the point that God is continually expanding/growing? He does it because he can't even conceive of the concept of eternity. The Bible portrays the eternity where God dwells as an environment that exists outside of the natural universe. And because of that, it is not subject to the laws or logic of material reality. Eternity operates outside of time and outside of the limitations of the material universe. The very idea of something having to grow and develop requires thinking in terms of the limitations of material reality.

In some ways, when thinking about and trying to understand eternity as it is spoken of in the Bible, we have to come up with metaphors and natural illustrations to even talk about it. But we also have to keep in mind the limitations of our various figures of speech. Ultimately, we have to recognize that the reason God had to reveal Himself and His ways in the first place was because we could never imagine those things using our own imagination. God's reality just doesn't fit what we can know naturally.

Sydnor is simply clueless when it comes to his understanding of God. The reason he is clueless is because he doesn't look to God's revelation to learn about Him. Rather, he starts with his own h y b r i d i z e d philosophy, then, based on that, he makes up his explanations about who God is. Doing that, he is certainly able to imagine various scenarios, but he has nothing concrete to tie his imagination to. Since he doesn't recognize the actual teachings of the Bible, he is left to create his own story out of whole

cloth – which he obviously does.

The approach Sydnor uses in his attempt to explain Christianity is, pure and simple, false doctrine. The fact that he has a PhD in theology means nothing since the theology he studied was not biblical theology.

In the early days of Christianity, the new Christians had to deal with all kinds of false beliefs. In fact, much of the New Testament was written specifically to point out those false teachings and help Christians avoid falling away from the true faith. It seems that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Teachers like Sydnor are in our theological schools teaching future pastors and other church leaders a false theology that they will, in turn, teach to people in their churches. It is critical that modern day Christians also get up to speed on the truth so they can not only stand strong personally, but also have the ability to point out the false teachings of those who would steer the world in a wrong direction.

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