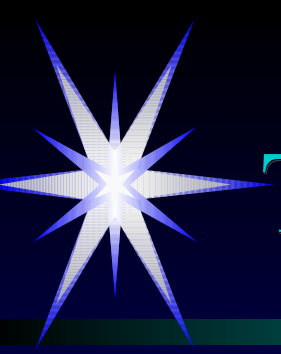




IV. Appreciating Our Responsibility for Wise Application

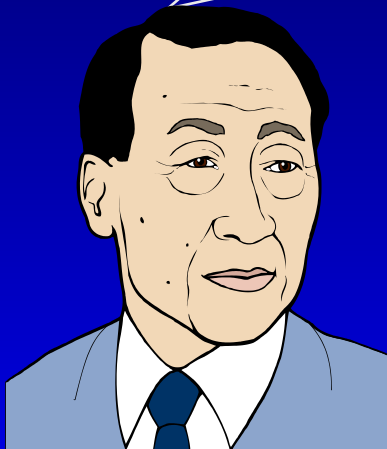


Taking into account
our situation

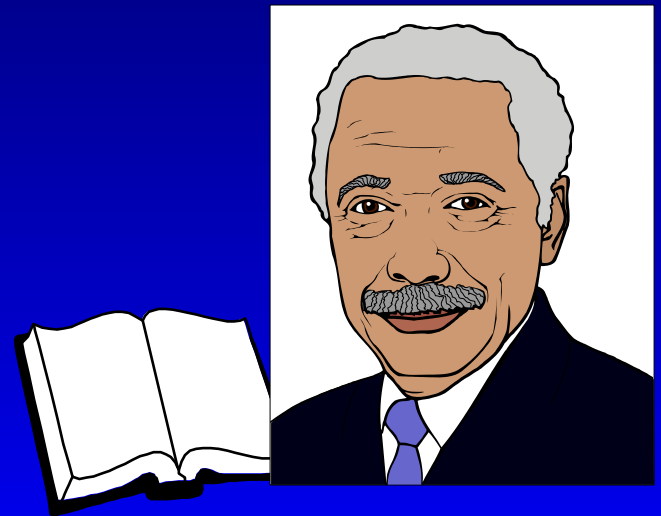


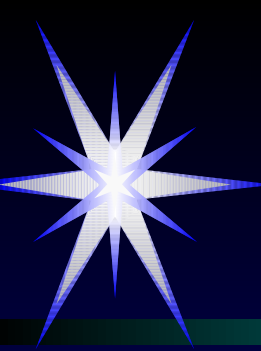
The Challenge

Sometimes I
don't see how the
Bible is relevant.



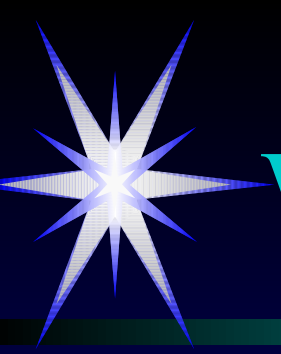
Let's look at
modern idols.





Reading Assignments

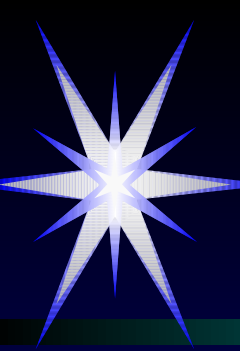
- ▶ Required: Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* chaps. 2, 4, 5 (pp. 6-17, 43-75). (hidden agenda for church life).
- ▶ Optional:
 - ▶ Stott, *Between Two Worlds*
 - ▶ Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*
 - ▶ Guinness, *No God but God*
 - ▶ Keller, *Counterfeit Gods*
 - ▶ Conn, “Theological Education,” *WTJ* 41 (1978-79) 324-363.
 - ▶ Zens, “Building Up the Body: One Man ...”



Where Are We?

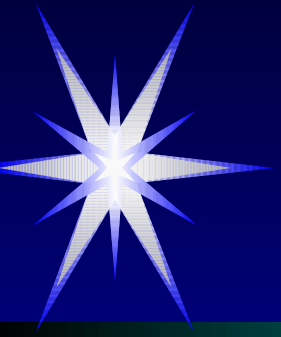
1. Preliminary acquaintance with the text
2. Exegesis in the original setting
3. Relations with other passages
4. Role in redemptive history
- 5. Application**

▶ Application stimulates other steps.

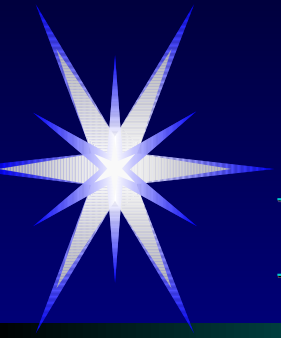


Implications of *Lex Christi*

3C, 4C implies applicability of Scripture



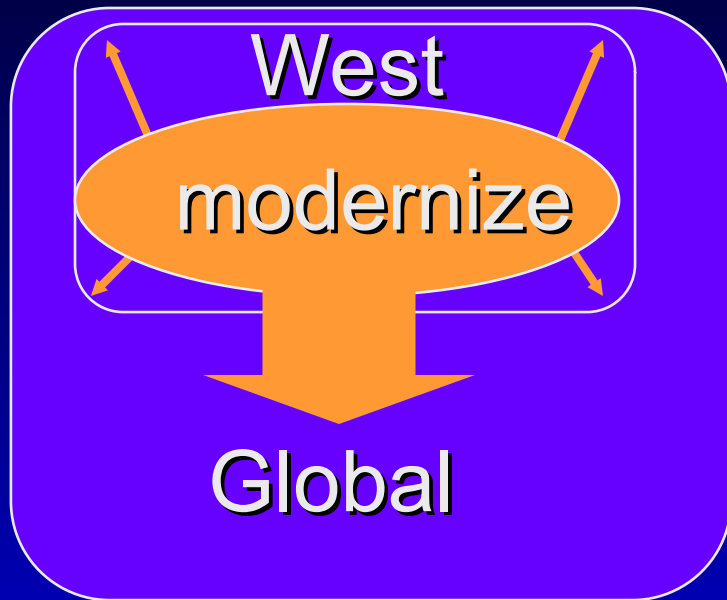
A. Discerning Cultural Idols



1. Secularization and Modernization



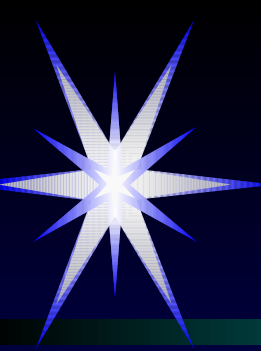
Setting of Secularization



Significant.



- Modernization in West.
- Penetrates other countries.
- International relevance.
- Terms: secularization; privatization, pluralization.
- Terms from Os Guinness, *The Gravedigger File* (building on Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*).



Secularization

~~Old
worship~~

**New
idol**

Not a
vacuum.



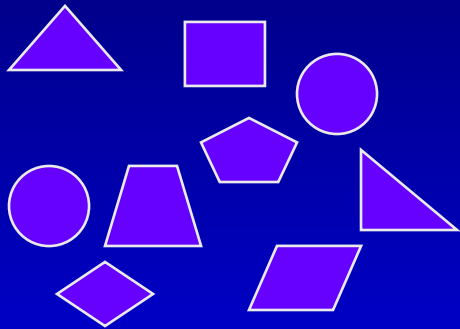
- ▶ Secularization removes force from religion.
- ▶ Comes from ideas and economy.
- ▶ Society has new idolatries:
 - ▶ Mammon, state power, self-fulfillment
 - ▶ Nature, humanity
- ▶ See Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*;
Keller, *Counterfeit Gods*



Pluralization



- ▶ Many ideas compete for allegiance.
- ▶ No ideology controls the whole.
- ▶ People “shop” for a church.
- ▶ Churches “sell” themselves.



Plurality

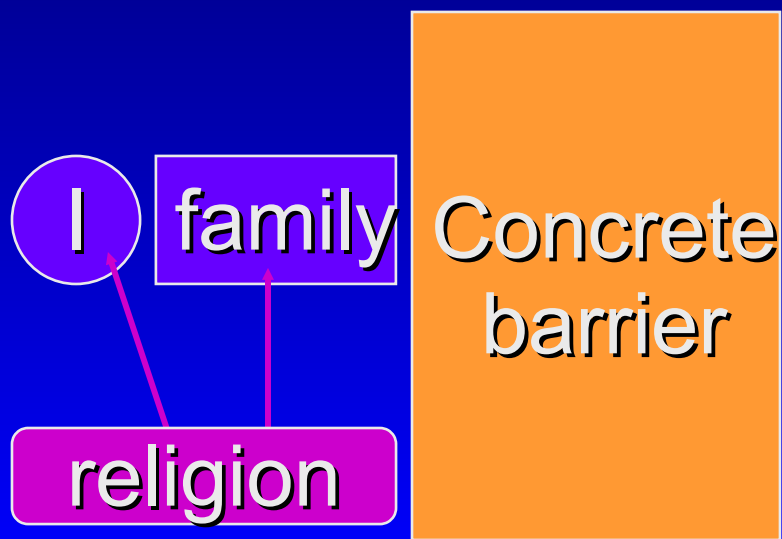


Distortion.



Privatization

- ▶ Religion restricted to private sphere.
- ▶ Not “public”:
 - ▶ science, politics, education, business, labor, art, communications



Where the action is:
society, culture,
knowledge, business



Civility

- ▶ Remaining value is politeness.
- ▶ Builds on
 - ▶ pluralization (polite to religions).
 - ▶ privatization (keep divisions private).





Effects of Civility on Evangelicals

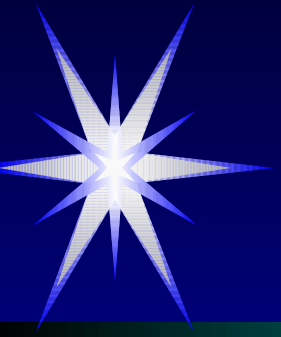
- ▶ Downplay offensive doctrines.
- ▶ Downplay dogmatic certainty.
- ▶ Lose dynamism springing from certainty.
- ▶ See James D. Hunter, *Evangelicals: The Coming Generation* 183-184, 212.



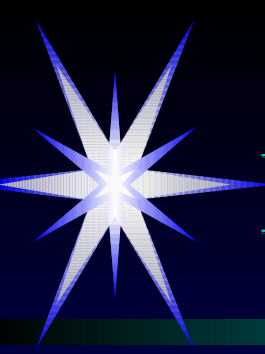
You believe
in hell??!

Uh ... well, you see,
some people get the wrong
idea. Christianity is about
loving everybody.

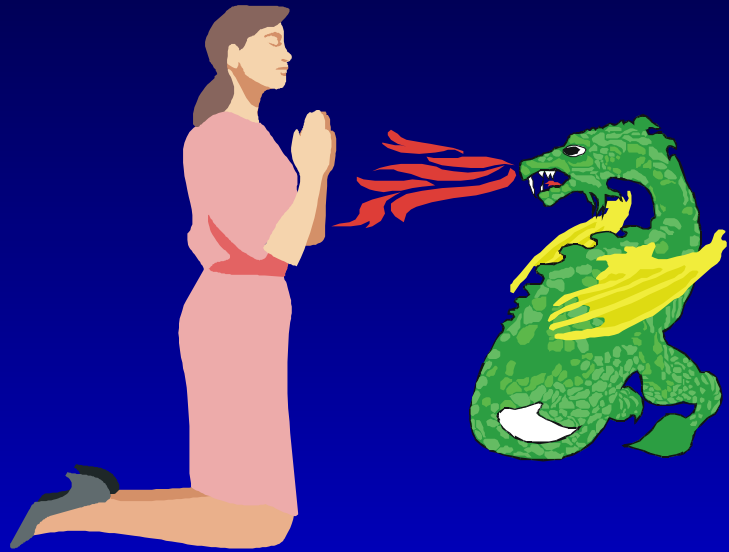




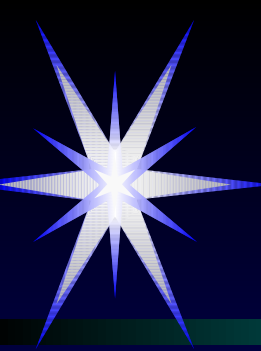
2. Response to Secularization: Critique of Modern Idolatries



Kinds of Idols



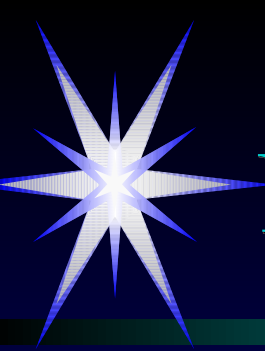
- ▶ History
- ▶ Nature
- ▶ Humanity
- ▶ Mammon
- ▶ Power
- ▶ Ecclesiastical Institutions
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Self



Idolatry in Revelation

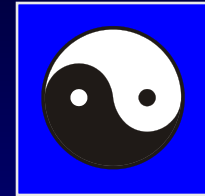
- ▶ Book of Revelation critiques idolatry.
 - ▶ idols of power and state (the Beast)
 - ▶ idols of pleasure and Mammon (the Prostitute).



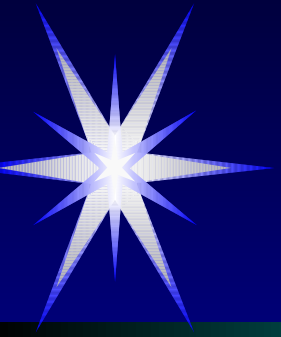


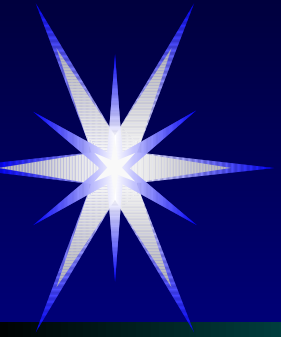
Non-Western Cultures

- ▶ Analyze idolatry in culture.
- ▶ Show God's presence in culture (Rom 1:18-21).

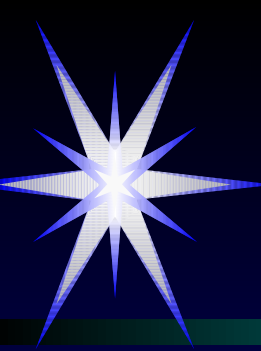


B. Biblical Interpretation in Communion with the Saints



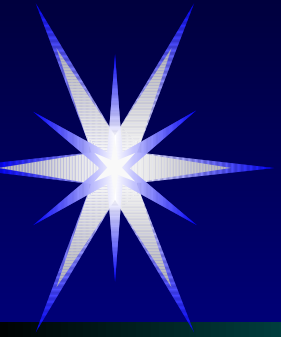


1. Dialogue with Others

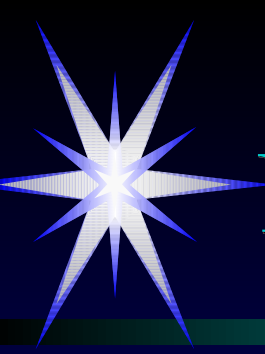


Insights from Your Congregation

- ▶ Diversity in the body (1 Cor. 12).
- ▶ You are expert in Scripture.
- ▶ Others are expert elsewhere.
- ▶ Consult others for applications:
 - ▶ science, business, art, politics, education, medicine.
 - ▶ “What are the issues and struggles?”



2. You Speak and Act




Nature of Church Ministry

- We naturally notice sermons.
- Other acts supplement communication.

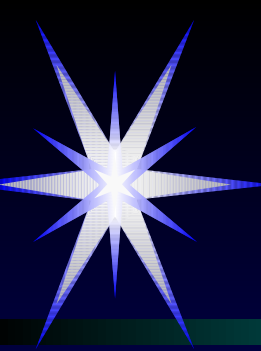


Christ's Ministry

- ▶ Teaching (as in parables)
- ▶ Working miracles (healing, exorcism)
- ▶ Fellowship with apostles and with “sinners”



Functioning
together.

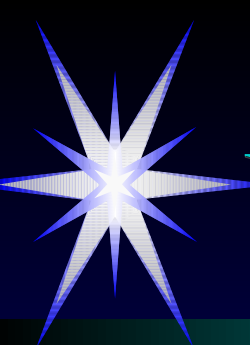


Ministry of the Apostles

- ▶ Words, Acts 20:20.
- ▶ Example, Acts 20:19.
- ▶ Sharing, Acts 20:35.
- ▶ Miracles, Acts 19:11.

Functioning
together again.

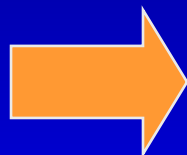




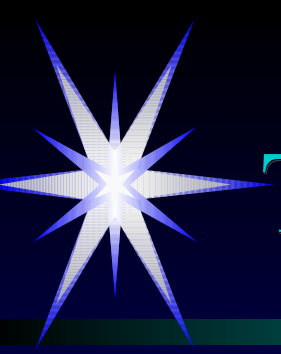
Word and Deed in Paul

- ▶ Paul's message and example, 1 Thess. 2:1-12.
- ▶ Timothy must maintain teaching and example, 1 Tim. 3; 4:6-16.

Paul



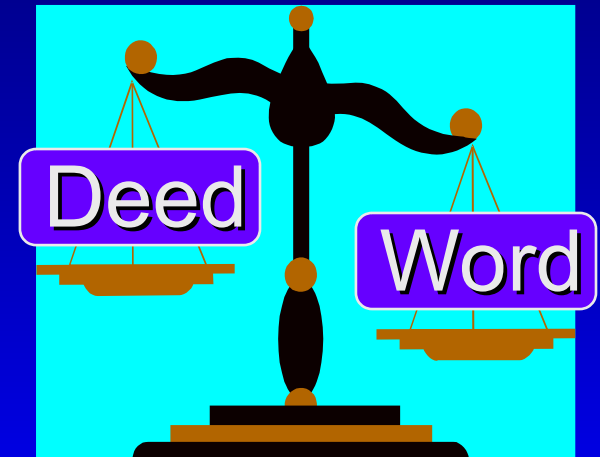
Timothy

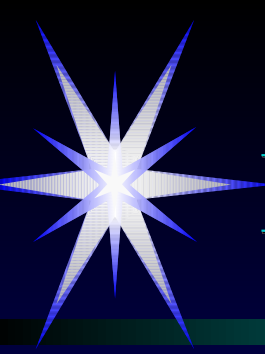


The Bias toward Word Only

Bias through one-sided reasoning:

- ▶ “Miracles are unique.
Jesus does not offer a model.”
- ▶ We use only the word.

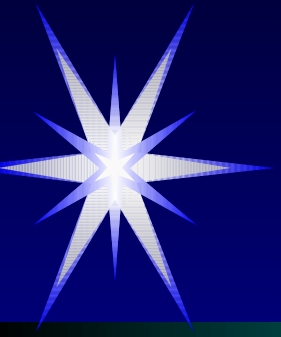




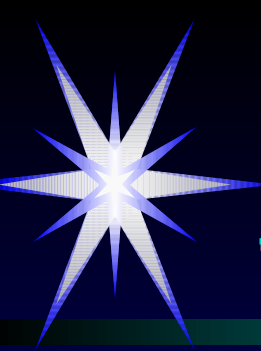
Maintaining Deed with Word

- ▶ Jesus' words are unique by inspiration.
- ▶ Jesus is an example by analogy.
- ▶ People understand word through experiences.





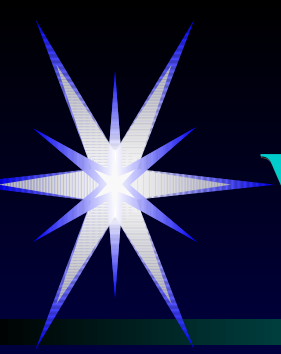
3. Love in Interpretation



Love as Hermeneutical Rule

- ▶ “On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets,” Matt. 22:40.
- ▶ Summed up in one commandment, Gal. 5:14.
 - ▶ “Love is the fulfilling of the law” Rom. 13:8-10.
- ▶ Hermeneutics summed up in one rule:
“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

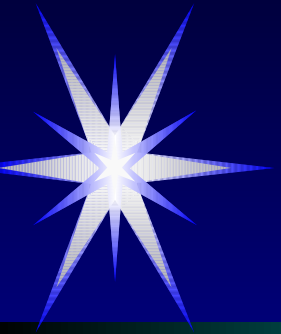
1. No gods	1. No gods
2. Idols	2. Idols
3. Name	3. Name
4. Sabbath	4. Sabbath
5. Parents	5. Parents
6. Murder	6. Murder
7. Adultery	7. Adultery
8. Steal	8. Steal
9. Witness	9. Witness
10. Covet	10. Covet



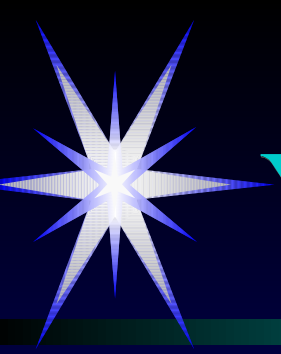
Violations of Love

You report true facts, but

- ▶ in contention.
- ▶ getting admiration of yourself.
- ▶ producing dependence on yourself.



4. Hidden Agenda



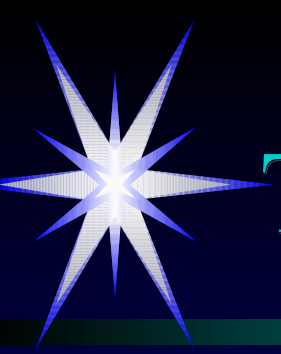
Your Manner Vs. Your Doctrine

General principle:

- ▶ Your life may undermine your teaching.



Watch your life!

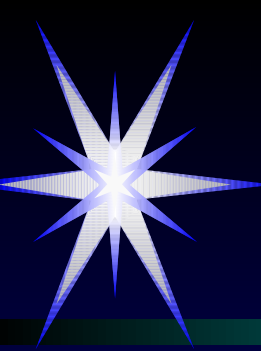


Teaching on Spiritual Gifts

- ▶ Teach the diversity of gifts.
- ▶ You only are up front.
- ▶ People will not really grasp it.



Ironic.



Constant Correction of “Errors”

You constantly correct errors.

What bad results?

- Incompetence of laymen.
- Importance of minutiae.
- Fear of general priesthood of believers.
- Formal correctness better than embodied truth.

Uh oh.



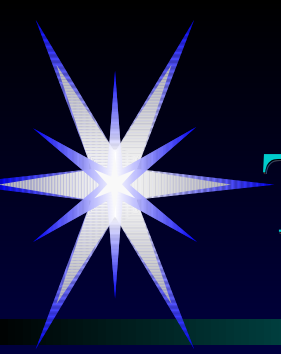


Superiority of Reformed Doctrine

Teach the superiority of Reformed doctrine.
What bad results?

- Spiritual pride.
- Security in your understanding of truth.
- Seminary-trained teacher as oracle.
- No fellowship with general evangelicals.

Is Reformed doctrine superior?
Not if you make yourself superior through it.

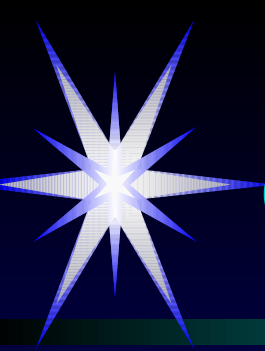


Teaching Infant Baptism

Teach infant baptism.
What bad effects result?

- ▶ People despise baptists.
- ▶ Exacerbate divisions in the body.

Teach the baptistic view as well?



Conducting Arguments

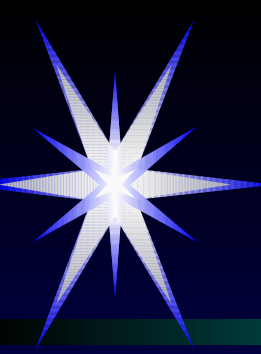
- ▶ See Roger Nicole, “How to Deal with Those Who Differ from Us.”
- ▶ John Newton, "On Controversy"
- ▶ We need zeal for truth.
- ▶ Combined with zeal for loving.

love

truth



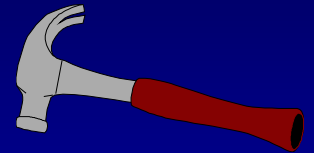
You can win the argument and lose the person!



Encouraging Lay Ministry

➤ Risk mistakes from lay ministry?

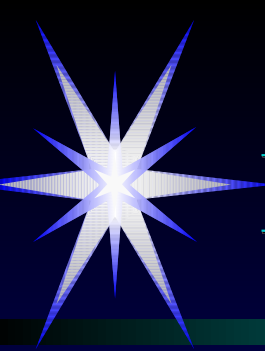
□ Will a carpenter let his son hammer?



□ Humility, not errorlessness, gives health.

Looks scary!





Roland Allen's Challenge

Typical desire for control

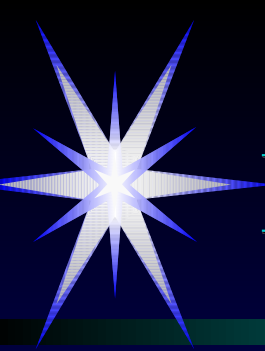
- ▶ We want zeal.
- ▶ But not too much.

Allen's counsel

- ▶ Spirit's revivals escape human control.

Maybe my plans are not the same as the Holy Spirit's.



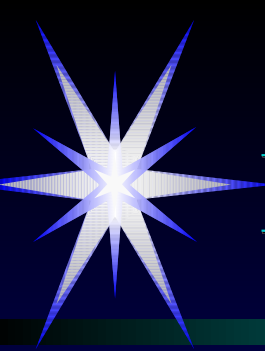


Lay Ministry through Training

- ▶ You cannot train everyone.
- ▶ Train elders.
They train others.
- ▶ Multiplication more important than skillful preaching.



Most pastors are
not Superman!



Respecting Holistic Intuitions

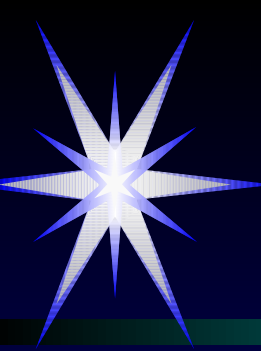
- ▶ “Hidden agenda” beyond the overt.
- ▶ Intuition picks it up.
 - ▶ “Women’s intuition.”
 - ▶ Charismatic “prophecy” at best.
(not claiming inspiration)
- ▶ Exercises of “discernment” (Phil. 1:10).



I sense
something's
wrong.

Nonsense!



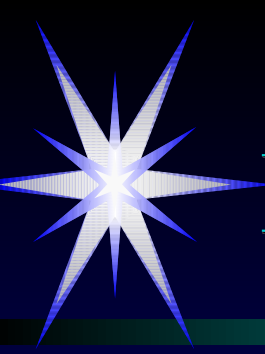


Earthly Static Security

- ▶ No security in a static church.
- ▶ You “feed the flock.”
Also more sheep and more flocks.
- ▶ No security in institutions,
doctrinal or ecclesiastical.
- ▶ Institutions can aid truth.
- ▶ The truth is infinitely deep.

Trust Christ!



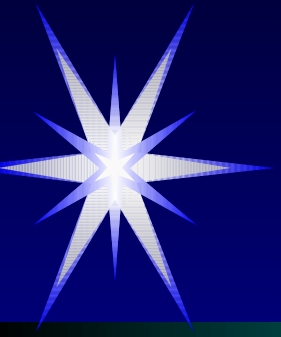


Love among Calvinists

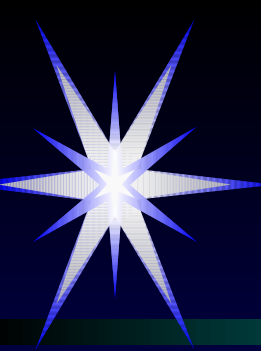
- ▶ Love God as Calvin did.
- ▶ “Reformed theology is like karate.”
- ▶ Are Calvinists unloving?

An on-going
challenge!





C. The Hope for the Consummation



Depth in God's Revelation

- ▶ Depth of truth, 1 Cor. 13:12; Eph. 3:17-20; 1:17-19.
- ▶ We will know fully later.
- ▶ Press on (Phil. 3:12-14).
- ▶ Example of Elisabeth Elliot.
 - ▶ “I am the LORD.”

There is
always more.

