
WILL OUR SONS DEFEND THE FAITH?



DANIEL J. EBERT III

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**A treatise on the danger of heresy and apostasy
within the Christian Church.**

DANIEL J. EBERT III

Will Our Sons Defend The Faith?

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PREFACE TO THE REPRINTING OF THE THIRD EDITION

At the instance of Rev. Charles Seet, a co-labourer with the author for seven years in the Philippines, we have great pleasure to reprint this important book.

We have known Rev. Dan Ebert III for two decades. We have become his good friend for his loyalty to our Lord in exposing the Devil's devices to undermine the Word of God.

Like the Monkey-god who can change himself seventy-two times except for his tell-tale wriggling appendage, whatever form Satan has adopted to attack God's Word, whether it be the old Liberalism or Neo-orthodoxy, the Social gospel or Neo-evangelicalism, is exposed to the bone by our friend.

A new form of attack on God's Word, however, has arisen. It is by the proliferation of translating the Bible based on the corrupt text of Westcott and Hort since the mid-twentieth century. This has caused an alarm bell to be sounded by Edward F. Hills, David Otis Fuller, D. A. Waite, David W. Cloud, G. A. Riplinger, S. H. Tow, the Trinitarian Bible Society, not the least Far Eastern Bible College. The hundred "versions" now flooding the market, headed by the NIV (New International Version) are now further condemned by the ICCC (International Council of Christian Churches) at its 50th Anniversary, August 1998, to be "perversions". We support only the King James Bible which has served the Church for almost four hundred years as being the most accurate and faithful translation based on the time-honoured and time-preserved Textus Receptus.

We believe with the Westminster Confession that “the Words of the Lord are pure words as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt **preserve** them from this generation **for ever**” (Ps 12:6,7). For Westcott and Hort to change the Textus Receptus and discard the equivalent of I and II Peter is cutting out a part of the heart of the Bible.

We need not argue against Westcott and Hort but on this score, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully” (Ps 24:3,4). The qualification for anyone to handle sacred Scripture is he must be totally sanctified, but the conspiracy of silence over Westcott and Hort’s unholy character has now been shattered!

Westcott and Hort were unregenerate men. They were modernists and liberals. They were secret worshippers of Mary. They were evolutionists, being friends of Darwin and Freud (called Fraud in *The Straits Times*). Westcott founded the Hermes Club which was infiltrated with homosexuality. This Hermes Club later developed into a Ghost Club which scoffers dubbed the Bogey Club. They became necromancers, consulting with the dead which Deut 18:11 condemns as “abominable”. Both ridiculed Christians who believe in the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture as “bibliolaters”. Both denied the fundamentals of faith including the virgin birth, blood, and resurrection of our Saviour.

“Will Our Sons Defend the Faith”? Let the sons of the author pick up their father’s pen to add a new chapter on the KJB versus the hundred perversions. And if there arises another form of Satanic attack on God’s Word let their sons’ sons continue “to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” Amen.

Timothy Tow

1999

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

This work makes no pretense of any literary value, nor should it be considered a church history nor a complete study of the doctrines treated. It is an adaption of material from the author's classroom notes on Modern Trends in Theology. It was compiled in the hope that it would help awaken God's people to the dangers that lie at their door.

It was with extreme regret and heaviness of heart that the section on Neo-Evangelicalism was written. But the confusion sown on the mission fields of Asia today makes an exposition on the dangers of compromise with unbelief a great necessity. These portions are written with the prayer that some of the Master's sheep might be spared from the apostasy with which many Christian leaders are now so openly in fellowship.

Heartfelt thanks goes to my two sons, Dan and Bill, who sent me their class notes, books and encouragement; Miss Helen Boydston, without whose editorial comments, suggestions and faithful effort the book would not have been possible; to my wife for patiently bearing the long hours in my study the work required; and to God's people who regularly uphold us before the Lord in prayer.

Dan Ebert III
Quezon City,
Philippines
1976

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND EDITION

In 1975 when *Will Our Sons Defend The Faith* was first written, I was only a freshman in college. The idea of taking a stand for the faith for the benefit of my own children did not at that time hold an important place in my mind. But the years have passed rapidly by and today, in 1992 during the 12th year of my missionary service, the desire for my own children, both physical and spiritual, to defend the faith holds a major place in my heart and mind.

I learned the importance of standing firmly for the truths of the Scripture from my father, the author of *Will Our Sons Defend The Faith*. My prayer is that in this same way the message of this book will touch the lives of many of God's people causing them also to stand firm for the basic doctrinal truths of the Scripture.

Might we be challenged again to always remember the importance of keeping the details of God's Word and His faithfulness before both our spiritual and physical children who are the church of tomorrow (Deut 6:4-9).

Rev. Bill Ebert
Manila, Philippines, 1992

INTRODUCTION TO THIRD EDITION

Several thousand copies of *Will Our Sons Defend the Faith?* have now, in the Lord's Providence been widely circulated among God's people. This slightly revised 3rd edition is issued in response to the continuing demand for this publication. It is appropriate that this volume should remain in the hands of God's people. There are increasingly dark dangers of compromise in the ecclesiastical world, especially in evangelical overtures towards Rome, ecumenical evangelism, and widespread departure from sound doctrine. This reprint is also timely as it coincides with the inauguration of the facilities of the Hilltop Christian Ministries in Antipolo, Rizal — the purpose of which is to provide a center for a healthy biblical fundamentalism in this part of the world.

Rev. Dan Ebert IV
Antipolo, Rizal,
Philippines, 1994

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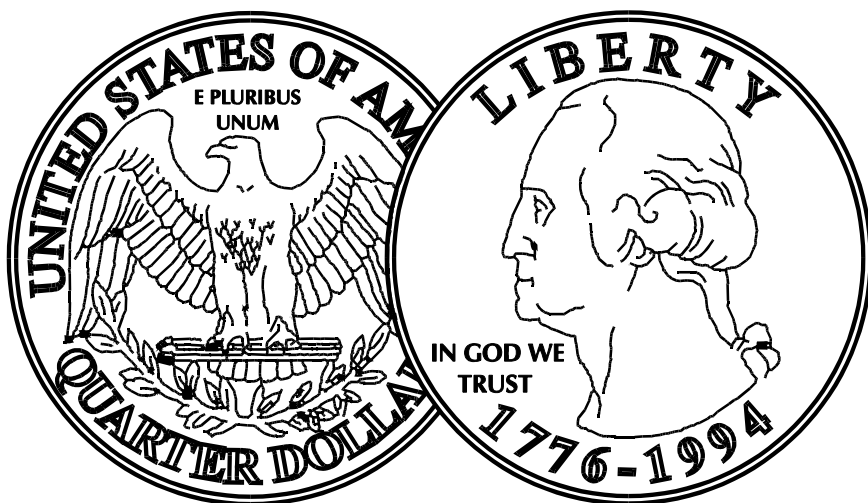
MY FATHER AND MOTHER

REV. & MRS. DANIEL J. EBERT II

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CHAPTER ONE IN GOD WE TRUST



The Christian Faith had a great influence in the founding and development of the United States of America. This may not seem important to believers in other lands. However, its relevance will be seen as we examine the facts, because a great lesson can be found here for the Fundamental Christian Churches around the world. We will see the rise of America as a great Christian nation. Then watch in amazement as the nation's adherence to the principles it so strongly held slowly begins to crumble. We must learn why this moral collapse began and see the message of danger it spells so clearly for the Christian Church.

Perhaps never before in human history has the world seen a nation so blessed as the United States of America. Just a few short years ago, the gross national product of the United States was equal to that of the rest of all the world. Even today, despite the recovery made by other nations, the United States is by far the richest nation in the world.

We must ask ourselves why the power and wealth of this particular nation has been so tremendous. It ranks only fourth in size and population, yet has surpassed older and larger countries. No doubt scholars have many reasons to offer for this phenomenon. But to any Christian student of American history, there can be only one answer.

The United States of America is the only nation in modern history founded by men who firmly believed God was supreme, both in government and in the lives of men. Many of these men publicly proclaimed their trust in Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour. They saw their lives as instruments to be used in the spreading of the Gospel. And they felt that while religious liberty was a part of the truly Christian State, it was not proper to allow non-believers to participate in government. A Christian government could not be run by men who did not believe in God or the Christian concepts by which justice would be administered. That these facts are true is well documented by official state papers from early government bodies and from personal statements of American leaders.

Virginia

Jamestown, the first successful permanent settlement in America, was founded in the Virginia Colony in 1606. The right to colonize this region was given to the Virginia Company whose charter read in part,

...by the providence of Almighty God, hereafter tend to His Divine Majesty, in propagating the Christian religion to such

people as yet live in ignorance of the true knowledge and worship of God...¹

In 1609 Captain John Smith, the head of the Colony was injured and had to return to England. After a difficult winter the settlers were prepared to leave. But they were met by new settlers from England, led by Governor Thomas West. He not only brought supplies with him, but a new charter as well. This charter read in part,

...inhabit within the said precincts of Virginia, aforesaid to determine to live together in the true fear and worship of the Almighty God, Christian peace and civil quietness ... And lastly, because the principal effect which we can desire or expect of this action is the conversion and reduction of the peoples in those parts unto a true worship of God and the Christian religion.²

So the first American Colony was established, not only for business and political purposes, but also in order that God-fearing men could be a testimony by both word and deed to the truth of the Christian faith. It is interesting to note that it was the expected outcome of the life of a God-fearing man that others would come to know the truth.

There is no claim being made here that all, or even most of the Colonists, did this with which they were charged. But the claim is made and documented that this early Colony had its founding based on a recognition of the Almighty God and the need for people to live by the precepts of the Scripture so that others would be converted.

It should be noted here that while the Virginia Colony was founded under the sovereignty of God, it was not founded by Separatists, but by members of the Church of England. However, revival and turning to the simple truths of the Scripture were to come to this area of the Colonies. A report in the Special Bicentennial Issue of Time Magazine of July 4, 1976, states:

While a political revolution has been in the making, a religious revolution has stirred in Virginia. . .The vacuum left by the Anglican apathy has already attracted a number of new

movements. First, the “New Side” Presbyterians preaching the “new birth”, a life-changing experience of salvation. Then the Baptists, with a similar message...³

The true Christian faith came to Virginia with great impact. Men and women turned to Jesus Christ for their salvation and started a “new life” in this new nation.

The Pilgrims

While Virginia was the first successful American Colony, by far the most famous arrival in America was that of the so-called Pilgrims. To understand who these people were and the background from which they came, a short consideration of the Puritan movement is necessary.

This movement started within the Church of England sometime in the 1500’s. The name Puritan came from the efforts of the movement to purify the Church of England from the heathen pageantry and cold formalism left over after it broke from Rome. These people held to simple religious beliefs which they saw taught in the Holy Scripture and followed by the early Christians. Their desire was for a simple manner of worship and a simplified church organization. Many of this group strongly believed in the independence of the local church. A large portion of them had been strongly influenced by John Calvin and felt the need for restoring the supremacy of the Scripture in the life of the Church.

Despite great persecution, many Puritans stayed within the Church of England and attempted to reform it. However, there were others who felt that their only hope of returning to the truth of the Scripture was to separate completely from the State Church. They believed in complete separation of Church and State and a congregational form of government. The roots of English non-conformist sects and the New England congregationalism were in the Puritan movement.⁴

Later, because of persecution, these Separatists left England and went to Holland. Although they were treated well in that land, their allegiance to England never weakened. They had been wrongfully persecuted because their Christian convictions led them to separate from the state supported Church. But as all true Separatist Christians throughout history, they recognized that governments are instituted by God and should be obeyed (Rom 13:1,2). They had only left England because their government forced them to choose between serving man or serving God (Acts 4:19,20; 5:29). They longed to return to the rule of their native land. So a group of these Separatists left Holland to go to America. They hoped to live again under their native flag, but with a religious freedom that was not granted them in England.

So the first settlers to arrive in the New England portion of America were the Separatist Puritans, now called Pilgrims. They acquired this name because of their wandering from England to Holland, then to America in search of freedom to worship God in accordance with their understanding of the Holy Scripture.

Just before the first group of Pilgrims landed, they composed one of the earliest codes of government to be used in America. It was called “The Mayflower Compact.” The major aim of their journey to America, according to this document, was to found a colony, “...for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith.”⁵ In these words we see, once again, that the United States of America had its beginning in the hearts of men and women who were willing to suffer greatly, even leaving their homeland, for the cause of the Gospel.

Pennsylvania

The Virginia Colony had been founded toward the southern part of the British lands in America in 1606. The early pilgrims arrived far to the north of them between 1620 and 1630. Located between these two groups, William Penn and his followers came to settle Penn’s Wood, now known as the State of Pennsylvania. Penn arrived in America in 1662, after having been persecuted and jailed for his Separatist Christian views and beliefs concerning the Scripture.

The people of Pennsylvania, as those in the other settlements and colonies, made as their first business the recognition of the sovereignty of the Almighty God and the Christian Faith in their government and daily life. The preamble to the “Great Laws of Pennsylvania,” passed by the assembly on December 7, 1682, declared,

Whereas the glory of the Almighty God and the good of mankind, is the reason and end of government, and therefore government itself is a venerable ordinance of God; and forasmuch as it is principally desired and intoned by the propriety and governor, and the freemen of the province of Pennsylvania and territories thereto belonging, to make and establish such laws as shall preserve true Christian and civil liberties...⁶

But giving us more amazing insight into the Christian character that built the United States, we read in the second section of this “Great Law,”

That all officers and persons commissioned and employed in the service of the government of this province, and all members and deputies elected to serve the assembly thereof, and all that have the right to elect such deputies shall profess and *declare they believe in Jesus Christ to be the Son of God and the Saviour of the World*, that are not convicted of ill fame, or unsober and dishonest conversation...⁷ (italics added)

These men knew that the government had to recognize the sovereignty of the Almighty God, if there was to be true Christian liberty and blessing. And such a government could not function as it should unless run by men who held these same beliefs. For this reason both office holders and those who elected them, must have made a public confession of their faith in Jesus Christ as both God and Saviour. Furthermore, they were to live personal lives that were consistent with such a profession of Faith.

William Penn was well known for his belief in religious freedom and the colony which he founded was a refuge for the oppressed and persecuted. But neither he, nor his fellow freemen of the colony felt that this freedom meant that non-believers should be allowed to help run the

government and form laws or policies. They obviously believed that a truly Christian nation would have to be led by men who knew Jesus Christ as Saviour and were guided by the Word of God.

New Hampshire

The compact of another New England Colony, New Hampshire, written in 1639, declared,

...in the name of Christ and in the sight of God combine ourselves together to elect and set up among us such government as shall be, to our best discerning, agreeable to the will of God.⁸

Articles Of Confederation Between The Colonies Of Massachusetts, New Plymouth, Connecticut, And New Haven.

Many others followed the original Pilgrims. When they had established enough settlements to necessitate a common government, these various groups wrote their own Articles of Confederation, in which they stated,

Whereas we all come into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely, to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to enjoy the liberties of the Gospel in purity and peace...⁹

Independence

Over 100 years after the first Separatists came to America, the colonies had grown to 13 and were on the brink of war with England. Thousands of settlers had come since those first Christians set foot on the new land. But their ideals had not changed. Their growing success and prosperity had not caused them to lessen their outspoken stand concerning Christian principles.

On May 17, 1776, the Continental Congress declared a day of prayer, humiliation and fasting. This declaration read in part,

...by a sincere repentance and amendment of life, appease God's righteous displeasure, and through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain His pardon and forgiveness.¹⁰

Although filled with thoughts of freedom and nationhood, the colonists still recognized that a righteous, holy God could be met only through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. Those who found salvation through faith in Him were expected to act in a manner befitting true Christians. These religious convictions were boldly pronounced in public by many of America's early leaders.

Samuel Adams, a member of the first and second Continental Congress, speaking on the "rights of colonists", in 1772, declared "The rights of the colonists as Christians may be best understood by reading and carefully studying the New Testament."¹¹

Franklin Pierce, the 14th president of the United States, in his inaugural address, continued this glorious theme.

"...the United States of America had her beginning in the hearts of men and women who,.... had been willing to suffer, lose all they had, and even leave the lands of their birth for the cause of the Gospel."

Let not the foundations of our hope rest upon man's wisdom...It must be felt that there is no national security but the Nation's humble, acknowledged dependence upon God and His overruling providence.¹²

It is clear that the United States of America had her beginning in the hearts of men and women who, for the most part, loved the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. Many of them had been willing to suffer, lose all they had, and even leave the lands of their birth for the cause of the Gospel. They recognized the fact that God's people can only worship Him in spirit and in truth when the church remains separate from unbelief.

The early settlers of America were followed by other men with the same principle and faith; men whose aim was to make America a

Christian nation. They recognized the sovereignty of God and their duty to govern and live in accordance with His Holy Word.

And so this little nation, founded by persecuted men and women, began to find a place in the annals of human history. It is with amazement that we look at her rapid growth in wealth and power.

In 1776, just over two hundred years ago, the will of the great army of Britain, broken by the courage of poorly trained troops, surrendered and left this new land to govern herself. Later, following humiliating defeats, both France and Spain also gave up their claims to territory that would become part of the United States. The country continued to grow and in its early years the schools and universities of the land were founded and dominated by men of God.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States had become a very wealthy nation. In 1914 Europe was on the brink of war. Both sides recognized they would need America's tremendous ability to produce weapons, if they hoped to win.¹³ Britain's blockade and the German submarine warfare were both aimed primarily toward keeping the young nation's arms from the enemy's shores. The United States was finally forced into the war and soon defeated the mighty German and Austro-Hungarian armies to restore peace in Europe.

After the victory of World War I, the United States entered a time of great prosperity. It was also a time of lawlessness and immorality, although these were exaggerated by both Hollywood films and the news media. It is a sad fact that these forces fought against, rather than for, national morality.

On the other hand, during this same period some of the great evangelists of the Church toured America, preaching to tens of thousands and leading thousands to Christ. Among these were Billy Sunday and the English evangelist, "Gypsy" Smith. Both were accused of lacking in refinement and education, but the impact of their Gospel preaching lasted for a generation.

Prior to 1800, many states and local governments had adopted alcohol prohibition. But it was during the early 1900's that the

greatest effort was put forth to limit the evils of alcohol on a wider scale throughout this young nation. In 1920 Amendment 18 to the United States Constitution made the production of alcoholic beverages illegal. What was probably the strongest propaganda campaign in the history of mankind was mounted against that law. Millions of dollars were spent by those who had profited from the liquor industry to ridicule prohibition. Hollywood movies tried to picture all of America as continually drunk and frequenting bars. It was true that in most large cities alcoholic beverages were available to those who were willing to go to some risk to search for and buy them. It was also true that gangsters became involved with immoral lawmen and politicians to protect this illegal business, but these activities touched only a small part of America. Yet these limited evils have been continually played up by those who foster immorality in public and private life.

There was a side to prohibition hidden by those who profit from the misery that alcohol brings. The Keswick Conference grounds in New Jersey had its start in Christian service three generations ago. It began as an effort to reach alcoholics with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Since the problem was great, the work grew and was generally hard-pressed for space to treat those whose lives were ruined by their addiction to alcohol. This work has served the Lord, led by three generations of men from the same Christian family. Those involved in the work personally reported to the author that during prohibition they almost closed their work among alcoholics because there were so few to be found. Other groups report the same surprising truth.

But the skillful work of the propagandist finally conquered the minds of the public, and in 1933 the 18th amendment was repealed. Once again Americans were free to buy this poison and to subject their sons and daughters to the possibility of ruined lives. It was again legal to act as Hollywood said all sophisticated people should act; that is, make every major decision and meet every major crisis with a glass of liquor in one's hand.

Having won the battle against alcohol, the Church had relaxed its vigilance. The price of this loss was to be tremendous. Not only had prohibition been defeated, but the Church itself had begun to wander from the truth. The great denominations of America had rapidly proven to be doctrinally and morally bankrupt. Never again would the Church people of America raise their voices so loudly and effectively against sin.

As the 1930's drew to a close, the scene was already set for the second world war. America faced this coming crisis as a nation that had drifted far from God. Yet the Lord's blessing was still upon the descendants of the people who had founded the country in His name and for His glory.

Notes

¹*Church History of the Constitution*, Vol. XII, as quoted by Dr. Arthur E. Steele, Quotations From "Early Founding Fathers and Leaders of Our Nation," Class Material, Ecumenism, 106; Clearwater Christian College, p. 1.

²Ibid.

³"Rebirth in Virginia," *Time Magazine*, Special 1776 Issue, Vol. 105, No. 20: 7/4/76, p. 61.

⁴Earl E. Cairns, *Christianity Through The Centuries* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954) p. 363.

⁵Philip Davidson, *The World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 13, "Mayflower Compact" (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1966) pp. 263-264.

⁶Church History (as per footnote #1) p. 2.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

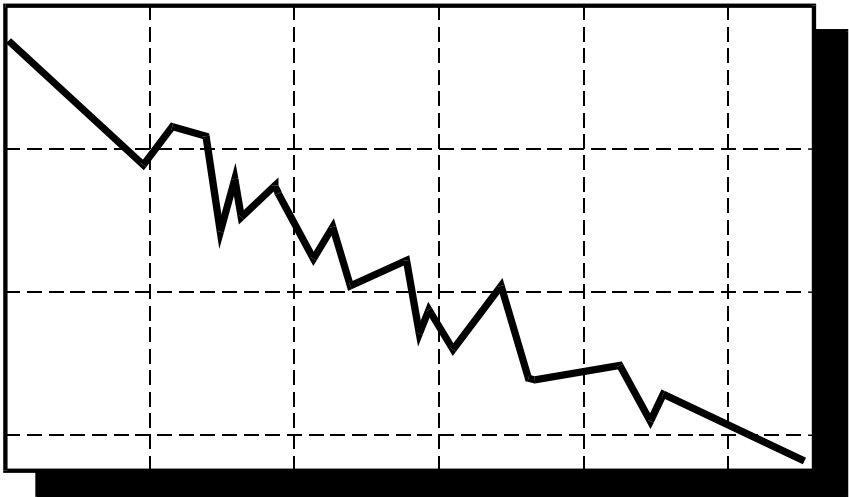
¹⁰Ibid, p.4

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Nelson Blake, *The United States: from Wilderness to World Power* (New York: 1959) p. 611-612.

CHAPTER TWO THE DECLINE AND DECAY



The American people had founded their country in the name of the Almighty God. They saw it as a place where they would be free to live a Christian life and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

God had greatly blessed America and by 1940 it had become one of the world's most prosperous nations. But the God who had so greatly blessed the land was becoming less and less a part of that country's life. Fighting wars on widely separated fronts, the Americans and their allies won some of the greatest victories in the annals of human warfare. But America had opened the floodgates of

decay and it was already beginning to eat at the nation's moral and spiritual strength.

The true Church in America was first weakened by liberal thought from Europe in the late 1800's. Then it was further hurt by the Modernists' strategic victory over the Fundamentalists in the early 1900's. By the mid-forties the church no longer held real power, either with American people, or the government. The time had come when the formal facade of Christianity would be torn away and the shame of America's growing anti-Christian character would be seen by the whole world.

Daniel Webster, one of early America's great statesman-orators, had long before warned the nation against turning from God. He said,

If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity.¹

America had forgotten the warning given by this great forefather. During the fighting in Europe, a nation whose motto was "In God We Trust," trusted instead in human reason. America made an alliance with the most godless, inhuman murderer of modern times, Joseph Stalin the leader of communist Russia. It may have been good human battle strategy, but it was definitely disobedience to the Almighty God who had so richly blessed America.

Under American leadership and pressure between 1941-45, the allies sent an amazing four million tons of war material and supplies to communist Russia. In the year 1945 alone, hundreds of ships and thousands of men were lost in an effort to aid the communists.² This program may have helped to win the war, but those supplies, plus millions of dollars in aid which poured into the communist cause were to haunt America in the years to come.

A few bold preachers such as Merral T. MacPherson of the Old Church of the Open Door in Philadelphia, warned America's leaders

against this alliance. But the voices of the few were muted by the silence of the many. Unlike Jehoshaphat, America's leaders did not repent (2 Chron 19:1-3). This alliance was to result in half of Europe being crushed under the heel of the godless tyrants of communism. It was to cause the slaughter or unjust imprisonment of millions of Christians and other innocent people.

As the war came to a close, strong pressure by the communists and their liberal fellow-travelers, forced President Truman to continue on with the idea of the Yalta Pact. This was done even though the Russians had already broken the spirit of that agreement. Prime Minister Churchill of England wrote President Truman reminding him that the freedom of the peoples of Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria and the Balkans was at stake. He reminded the American President that the Russian system was based, not on freedom, but on a communist police state which the Russians had applied to every nation which had fallen victim to their "liberating" arms.³ But on July 1, 1945, despite a few protests, the American high command began a withdrawal of all allied forces to zones agreed upon with the communists, while the Russian army remained in control of all Eastern Europe.

The communist plot for world domination was long from being over. In 1949 China, tired from almost two decades of war, fell. The next year, South Korea was attacked, and America, hamstrung by the liberal-controlled United Nations, entered the battle. For the first time in its history, the greatest nation in the world was willing to spend the lives of its sons in a war it did not plan to win. General Douglas MacArthur, a military genius and a man who recognized the sovereignty of the Almighty God, cried out for America to crush its evil foe. But the leaders of the nation turned a deaf ear. Finally, unable to stand the righteousness of the old soldier's cry, they brought him home and placed him in retirement. By this action, they willingly allowed one half of the Korean nation with over eleven million people to remain under the domination of Communism.

South Korea held firm and a great movement of the Holy Spirit saw a strong Church continue in that part of a divided nation. But decay is not stopped by partial victory. Sin cannot be covered by platitudes and diplomatic pronouncements. The moral decay of America was to become clearer in the days ahead.

Communist expansion continued unabated. After sacrificing thousands of American lives, the government, moved by the cries of liberals and communists who now infested almost every area of American life, decided Indo-China and its millions of people were not worth fighting for. And we in Asia stood shocked and unbelieving as the greatest nation in the world withdrew its troops and stood idly by while South Vietnam was swept under the communist flood. As men of good will had long predicted, Laos and Cambodia were soon to fall as well. How many Christian pastors and other innocent victims will die? At present news is slow in coming, but we must note with sadness that no country in the history of the communist movement has ever fallen under its power without a terrible blood bath of the innocent and a systematic, ruthless effort to exterminate the Christian Faith.

NOTE: As the second edition of this work was being prepared, the outcome of America's withdrawal from Indo-China became clearer. The extremes of the Pol Pot communist regime in Cambodia resulted in the most horrible act of genocide ever recorded. It is estimated that close to one half of the entire population of that country has been slaughtered.

Despite the torture, persecution and murder, the World Council of Churches and other liberal groups that worked to remove American forces from Vietnam remained predictably silent. They showed once again their belief that while it is wrong for those who love freedom to oppose communism, it is all right for the communists to persecute and murder any who oppose them.

How could this nation, so blessed of God, stand by while innocent people suffered under godless tyranny? The answer lies in

the moral and spiritual decay that had been clearly coming to the surface all over America.

In 1963, the Supreme Court of United States of America, under the prodding of a professional atheist, ruled that prayer was unconstitutional in the schools. Americans were amazed to hear the descendants of a governmental body that in 1892 had declared America was indeed a Christian nation, now saying it indeed was not. No longer did unbelievers just have the advantage of sanctuary and prosperity in America. Now they were claiming the right to destroy the nation's Christian character. In this they had the aid of America's judges, politicians and liberal churchmen. The American people resented the ruling and spoke against it. In every poll taken, they expressed their disagreement with the Supreme Court's anti-prayer ruling. But the politicians stood firm.

“Americans were amazed to hear the descendants of a governmental body that in 1892 had declared America was indeed a Christian nation, now saying it indeed was not”

A constitutional amendment aimed at permitting *voluntary* prayers in public schools was defeated 240 in favor 162 against, less than the needed 2/3 majority. It was noted that *although the public strongly favored the legislation 38 major religious denominations opposed it.*⁴ (italics added)

The same atheists whose legal action brought about the Supreme Court's anti-prayer ruling, now opened their own church. And in parody of other religious groups, they have now elected “saints.”⁵ Obviously the whole situation is a joke to them. And why not when many leaders of our nation and the National Council of Churches join with them to help destroy the religious faith of the nation?

And so, as America celebrated the 200th anniversary of her existence as a nation, there were no prayers, no Bible readings, and, in fact, no mention of the great God who had so richly blessed her.

And atheists, aided by liberal churchmen, continue their attack on everything that still marks America as a nation founded by men who trusted in God.

The following excerpts from various American publications document this continuing attack.

A fifty-year old tradition of giving Bibles to high school graduates has now come under attack, led by a minister.

The president of the Grand Rapids chapter of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, has charged that the fifty-year old tradition of giving Bibles to graduating seniors in Zeeland, Mich. is unconstitutional. *Rev. Jay A. Wabeke, a retired Congregational Minister*, has filed a suit in the U. S. District Court asking a halt to the practice and calling the Zeeland school board to repay public funds used to buy the Bibles.⁶ (italics added)

No Easter in America's once-Christian schools.

A U.S. District court judge in Miami, Florida, partially upheld the claims of a teacher that setting school vacations to coincide with Easter and Christmas, discriminate against non-Christians. The judge ruled that Miami public schools must schedule their spring vacations on a fixed date each year. Easter is a changeable date; hence vacations cannot arbitrarily coincide with it.⁷

Children Refused Permission Even to Thank God in Song in America's Schools.

When her daughter mentioned that a song sung at school before cookies mentioned God, Mrs. Janet Langford, Rohnert Park, Calif., took action that resulted in banning the kindergarten song. Though a thousand parents protested, Judge Joseph P. Murphy Jr. decided in favor of Mrs. Langford and declared the singing of the song in public school 'clearly unconstitutional.'⁸

No Room for God in America's Bicentennial Celebration.

The American Revolution Bicentennial Administration has turned down grants for two Arizona projects, “Arizona Heritage Blessed by God: A Youth Pageant” and “The Union of the Fifty States.” The reason for the refusal was, according to ARBA Chief Charles F. Goodspeed: “We are of the opinion that these projects are *not exclusively sectarian in nature* but on the contrary *would include religious subject matter* and, as such, have the impermissible effect of advancing religion contrary to the first amendment.⁹ (italics added)

We have seen the amazing spectacle of a nation founded on faith in God celebrating its 200th anniversary without mentioning God at all. No doubt this was done so as not to offend the liberals and the United States Supreme Court. But what about God? How could a people allow their God-given heritage to be systematically destroyed by liberal judges, so-called Christian clergymen, and outright atheists? How could the American Church remain so strangely silent while viewing the un-Christian conduct of its nation?

America’s blessing came because her founding fathers demanded reverence for God and His Word. They made the Church and service to God a central factor in the life of the nation. Therefore, we must look to the church to find the answer to the country’s spiritual decline and moral decay. In the succeeding chapters, we will try to observe the dangers which overcame a large portion of the American Church. By doing this, we hope to clearly mark these dangers. We do this with the prayer that God’s people around the world will be watchful and faithful to warn against them. For we must conclude that the spiritual decay of the Nation is just a reflection of that same decay in her churches.

Notes

¹*Church History of the Constitution*, Vol. XIII as quoted by Dr. Arthur J. Steele, “Quotations Concerning The Bible By Founding Fathers, Presidents, and Great Men of our Nation”; Class Material, Ecumenism 106, Clearwater Christian College, p. 1.

²Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. VI, *Triumph and Tragedy* (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1953) pp. 464-466.

³Ibid, p. 497.

⁴Darline R. Stille, *The World Book Year Book*, 1972 “U.S. Constitution” (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corp., 1972) p. 544.

⁵*The Milwaukee Journal*, UPI (Austin, Texas: Tuesday, Sept. 16, 1975).

⁶“Americans United Leader Asks Ban on Bibles to Graduates,” *The Alliance Witness* (11/5/75) p. 13.

⁷“School, Not Easter Vacation Granted,” *The Alliance Witness* (9/11/74) p. 13

⁸“School ‘Thank you song’ Stirs Court Action,” *The Alliance Witness* (8/28/74) p. 13.

⁹“No Room At the Inn”, *Third Century Report*, (11/10/75) p. 4.

CHAPTER THREE NOTHING SACRED



During the 1700's and 1800's, the United States of America was a simple Christian society. Its educational system was almost totally Church-oriented. A full knowledge of the Bible was believed necessary. So Bible study took precedence over classical learning.¹ A Bible-based faith, taught by simple Bible preachers, was the center of American education and the bed-rock of the young nation. At this time America's schools had no prestige in the world of international education.

It was to Europe that one had to look for the great centers of philosophical and theological thought. The famed and ancient universities, such as Heidelberg in Germany and Basel in

Switzerland had been centers of education from the 1400's and before. World famous philosophers and theologians taught the latest ideas and systems of philosophy in these institutions. These major centers of European thought were, for the most part, under the complete domination of humanistic philosophers.

Philosophers are basically speculators who attempt to find truth or reality by means of human reasoning. "Philosophy is the attempt to give a reasoned concept of the universe and of man's place in it."² These men have found that they could not speculate about the deeper meanings of life without including God in their reasoning process or philosophical system. So through powers of human reasoning, they attempt to answer such questions as: Does God exist? If He exists, what do we mean by exist? What do we mean by God? Does God influence man? If so, in what way? Of course, in order to speculate in this way, philosophers must deny the authority, divine inspiration, and literal inerrancy of the Holy Scripture. So unbelieving philosophers say,

A certain amount of skepticism has tended to precede and stimulate philosophical reflection. It is a reminder of the need of caution and the dangers of dogmatism. It says to us: "Don't be too sure." "Don't be dogmatic." "You may be wrong." "Be tolerant and open-minded."³

These men must deny the idea of supernatural revelation since they feel that the reasoning powers within the human intellect are the only means for working out that which can be known. If the claim of the Scripture is true and God has indeed revealed himself to man, then the need for philosophical thought in the areas that have to do with eternal values of life are greatly lessened.

God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son....(Heb 1:1,2)

If it is further true, as the Scripture claims, that man cannot know God through human reasoning, then philosophy in that area is

completely worthless. That small school of philosophers who are truly Christian recognize this truth as it is expressed in the Scripture.

For after that in the wisdom of God *the world by wisdom knew not God*, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Cor 1:21, italics added).

It is no wonder then that those who follow human philosophical thought concerning God vehemently deny the supernatural inspiration of the Holy Scripture.

It is often very difficult to differentiate between a philosopher and a so-called theologian. This is not only true today, but was true in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The reason for this is very clear: if a theologian refuses God's revelation of Himself through the Holy Scripture, he then must speculate concerning God. As soon as the theologian begins to speculate concerning God, in effect, he becomes a non-Christian philosopher.

Because of the difficulty of travel and communications in the 1800's, the philosophical and theological thought from Europe was slow in coming to America. For many years the people of the United States continued to find God's blessing as they met him by faith in Christ and lived under the authority of His Holy Word. However, this new European thought, with all its heresy and destructive forces, was gradually gaining a foothold in America. Today these forces are still very much at work on the contemporary religious scene, although often under new names.

We cannot begin to understand the decay of the spiritual power in the churches of America without considering the origin of the poison which in the 1800's was injected into its bloodstream. So we will consider very briefly and in a simple fashion the teachings of a few men whose brilliant minds brought so much destruction to the young Church in America and eventually around the world.

Immanuel Kant (1742-1804)

Immanuel Kant was born and lived all his life in Königsberg, East Prussia. He spent most of his adult life as a teacher at the University of Königsberg and was teaching there at the time of his death.⁴ Despite the fact that he saw very little of the world in which he lived, his teaching began a revolution in the area of philosophical thought.

This revolution not only spread throughout the world of his day, but is still very influential today, over 180 years after his death. Kant is considered to have had one of the most daring and original minds in the history of human thought.⁵

Kant is extremely difficult to read and understand. Although the great minds of the world have pondered over his work for more than a century and a half, scholars still disagree when commenting on various aspects of it. We will try to make just a brief summary of some of Kant's ideas which have so deeply affected the world and the religious scene in modern times.

A Two-Part System - Previous to Kant, philosophers saw existence as a unified system with God, man, experience, natural and supernatural, all interacting one upon the other. They devised various systems to explain these things, but basically viewed them as part of a whole. Kant, however, saw a two-world system.

The first part of his system was called the “**Phenomena.**” This was the world of the senses, that which man could really know. It is the world understood by the interaction of human reason and experience. Kant used the term Phenomena to refer to all those things related to the world and man's senses.

The second part of Kant's system is called the “**Nöumena.**” This is the area of the soul, God, and all else that is beyond human sense perception and reason. Since, according to Kant, all reliable knowledge comes from sense experience and human reason, man cannot know anything about God, or other areas of the Nöumena. Because Kant sees human reason and sense experience as the only

way to truth, he rejects the idea of a God who reveals Himself through the Scripture. To Kant, the Bible was just a book of human history.⁶

Although Kant rejected the idea of supernatural revelation, men were soon to apply his two-part system to the Scripture. The liberal theologians were to reason that if the Bible is a revelation from God and therefore part of the Nöumena, it would not need to be reliable in the area of the Phenomena. That is to say, the Bible could be true in areas of faith (the Nöumena) but unreliable in the areas of science and history (the Phenomena). In very recent years some among the Neo-Evangelicals have also applied this Kantian type of thinking to the Scripture. This *seems* right to men as they follow a human system of thought. But we must remember the Scripture says,

There is a way which *seemeth* right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Prov 14:12, italics added).

Human Reason Is Supreme - Kant saw man as the center of all existence, and placed human reason above everything else. He said man was beginning to escape from immaturity by learning that he did not have to lean on any power or depend on any authority *outside himself*. Man should be free to think without any sanctions or restrictions. In effect, Kant replaced the self-authenticating God who reveals Himself through the Bible with glorified man.

Kant declared that man acts morally when his will is controlled by reason. This happens because man has a sense of duty, or what Kant called “the categorical imperative.” Therefore man and his sense of duty must be the starting point for all religion. Man does what is right because of what he is within himself, not because of anything that happens to him through some outside force. The categorical imperative of Kant was later to become the “divine spark” of the liberal theologian. These theologians would join Kant in seeing man as sufficient unto himself.

God, Salvation, The Hereafter - Since everything to do with God and the soul were in Kant’s area of the Nöumena, man could not

know anything about them. But Kant allowed for certain “Postulates” to complete his philosophical system. A Postulate is something required, a self-evident truth that doesn’t demand proof. Kant declared that God, the soul, and immortal life are necessary as rewards for those who obey the dictates of their reasoning powers, or the categorical imperative. They exist because the system could not be complete without them. What are they? According to Immanuel Kant, no one can know because they are in the world of the Nöumena.

There is no room in Kant’s system for a God whose love draws men to Himself. Man does not need a Saviour because he has within himself the power to do what is right. Man draws himself toward God when man does that which he knows within himself is right. But the Scripture says, in the words of Jesus Christ,

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me (Jn 12:32; see also 1 Pet 2:21-25).

Man then, according to Kant, is supreme. God, whatever that is, is out there somewhere and of no real consequence in the everyday world of the Phenomena. To Kant, God is recognized only because of man’s moral need for Him to exist. Sometimes it sounds as if Kant is saying that God exists simply because man has decided that he does. It was Kant’s thinking, especially in the area of a two-part system, that helped to lay the philosophical framework for both higher Biblical criticism and modern theology.

“There is no room in Kant’s system for a God whose love draws men to Himself.”

After all this blasphemy, one would think things could not get any worse. Kant, however, did see certain things as right or wrong. He saw certain principles as absolutes which were unalterable. But into the halls of European higher learning was to come a man whose philosophy would bring even greater havoc into human thought than Kant’s deifying of human reason. This new philosophy would lead to

an attempt to destroy all stability in society, government, and religion.

George W.F. Hegel (1770-1831)

Although this may be denied by some, George Hegel did more to change men's outlook on life than any other philosopher. His basic idea permeates modern theological and social thought. Some of the modern trends in theology which have been used to deliberately confuse the minds of believers, have as their basic idea the thoughts introduced by Hegel.

Hegel's system is generally referred to as "Dialectics." In this process there is a merging of opposites to form a new idea or thought. Simply stated, Hegel called the position held the "**Thesis**," and the position opposed to it the "**Antithesis**." But he stated that these two ideas must not remain as opposites or in opposition to each other. According to him, this holding of an idea and a lack of willingness to compromise was the very thing which kept philosophers from accomplishing their quest for truth. The two opposites, after a confrontation, must move toward each other, finally merging. This action of the merging of former opposites is called a "Dialectic." The new thought formed by the dialectic is called a "**Synthesis**." We might try to explain this process by saying, "The secret of the world is in the relationship of 'yes' to 'no,' then of both to 'nevertheless'."⁷ The resulting synthesis is not the end to Hegel's process. The new synthesis will then break down into another set of thesis and antithesis and the process will begin again.

Hegel claimed to be looking for what he called the "**Absolute**," which might be defined as the final or ultimate synthesis. But in effect, his philosophy destroyed any hope man ever thought he had of finding what he claimed to seek. Hegel was, in fact, worse off than his predecessors since his constant accommodation and development left nothing stable or certain. "No idea for Hegel, has a fixed meaning, no form or understanding has eternal unchanging validity."⁸

So Hegel became the father of the “Nothing is Sacred” philosophy. Everything must change and this must be done by accommodation which destroys what was, to make what must be. Hegel’s system was to help Darwin form his Theory of Evolution, Karl Marx and Fredrick Engel their ideas of Modern Communism, and the unbelieving theologians their Dialectic Theology. The latter would see religion in constant change as the mind of man would save himself and the world. Darwin’s Evolution, Marxist Communism, and Modern Theology, all have in common the idea that nothing is absolute, nothing is sacred. All must change under the hand and mind of man who is supreme in the universe.

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Karl Marx was a German writer and philosopher. His writings and theories form a basis for all communist movements in the world today. He took Hegel’s idea of change through confrontation and accommodation and placed it in the material world. This gives us the basic communist idea of change through destruction and reorganization. Without the original idea of Hegel, the ideological conflicts of our present world would be hard to imagine.⁹

Communism thrives on turmoil because, to their way of thinking, anything which upsets order is an aid in movement toward their ultimate synthesis. In communism, the ruling class is the thesis, the working class the antithesis, and the ultimate synthesis will be a state controlled by the people living in complete equality. But like Hegel’s philosophy, their system succeeds in destroying, but never in developing anything as good as that which they have destroyed.

Many Christians have been amazed at the sympathy and comradeship liberal theologians feel for the godless communist movement. But it is not really surprising since they are both, in different areas of life, searching by the same methods for the same end. Their failure springs from the same rejection of the absolute Deity who, through His own revelation to mankind, seeks to draw men to Himself through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Theologians

All attacks on the Church have started and centered on an attack upon the Holy Scriptures. Today's liberals will go to any length to convince God's people that fellowship should be around Christ, not around the Bible. This is merely an attempt to substitute some mystical kind of Christian fellowship for an adherence to the truth of the Bible. It is simply using the name Christ to weaken the position of the Scripture, for apart from its divine, inspired revelation, we cannot know anything about the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Early attacks on the Scripture were less subtle than they are today. In their early stages, these attacks mainly took the form of criticism of the text, especially the Old Testament. This was done in an attempt to prove the Bible was just man's word rather than God's. In the seventeenth century, Jean Astruc and John Eichhorn noted the different names used for God and declared that that was proof that the Pentateuch came from different sources. Eichhorn strongly taught the idea that the Bible must be critically examined, just like any other human book.

Two Germans, Graf and Wellhausen, devised a system which was quickly adopted by liberal theologians. They applied the theory of evolution to the Old Testament, claiming that the different names for God showed a development in human religious thought. The Scripture then is not a revelation about God, but a history of the development of man's philosophical thought concerning Him.

Having no fear of God before their eyes, the liberal philosopher-theologians did all in their power to discredit God's Word. Their descendents are with us today, just as actively at work. They must be marked and carefully avoided.

Along with the attack of higher criticism on the Scripture, theologians, following Hegel's thought, attacked every point of the Christian faith. David Frederick Strauss (1808-1874) and Ferdinand Baur (1792-1860) both borrowed Hegel's logic to prove that Christianity and its New Testament was a gradual development of the Christian Church. Baur claimed the New Testament was not the work

of the Apostles but that various Christian writers had compiled it through the years. He dated New Testament books in whatever fashion best suited his theories, clearly illustrating the application of Hegelian dialectic to Bible study. He taught that Jesus Christ was just a “starting point” of the Christian faith rather than the “greatest figure” which Christians have made Him. “The God-man,” said Strauss, “is no person, but humanity as a whole.” And, like all theologians who follow Hegel’s ideas, Strauss ended up with everything merging together into God.¹⁰

It is not our purpose to study seventeenth and eighteenth century German philosophy or the theologians of that time, but to set forth present day dangers to the Church. Therefore, we will not consider further the many men involved in these apostate thoughts which were soon to bring such havoc on the young American Church and other churches around the world. Instead we will go on to examine the way in which they overran the Church.

Notes

¹Earl E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954) p. 399.

²W.P. Montague, as quoted by Harold H. Titus, *Living Essays in Philosophy* (New York: American Book Co., 1956) p. 8.

³Harold H. Titus *Living Essays in Philosophy* (New York: American Book Co., 1946) p. 8

⁴W.T. Jones, *World Book Encyclopedia*, Fifth Edition, Vol. II, “Immanuel Kant” (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corp., 1966) p. 200.

⁵Henry D. Aiken, *The Age of Ideology* (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1945) p. 27.

⁶Earl E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954) p. 445.

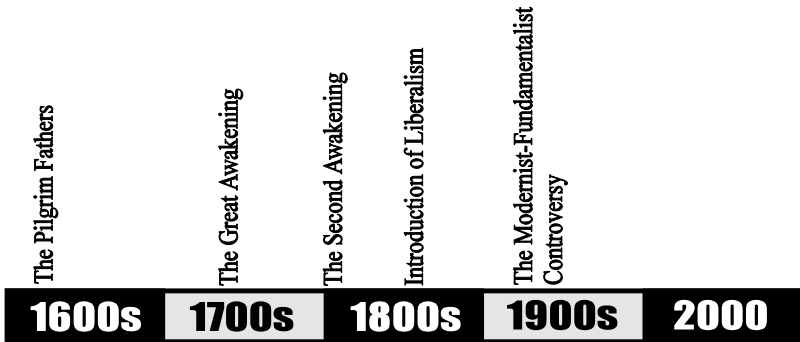
⁷Hugh Ross Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1937) p. 104.

⁸Henry D. Aiken, *The Age of Ideology* (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1956) p. 72.

⁹Ibid, p.71

¹⁰Hugh Ross Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1937) p. 118.

CHAPTER FOUR THE ENEMY WITHIN



We have seen that the liberal theology which caused such spiritual destruction in America had its origin in Europe, especially in Germany. It began with theologians who accepted into their systems of thought the new philosophical ideas of their day. This was seen as an intellectual way to view historic Christianity. But its end result was the denial of every major doctrine of the Christian faith.

Spiritual Blessing In The American Church

The Scripture reminds us that the Christian is in a battle against the forces of Satan. Believers are assured of victory in this battle through the strength of the Lord. However, the Christian must be vigilant in this fight otherwise a long, slow retreat before the powers of darkness is inevitable. The Scripture exhorts us to,

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh

and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph 6:11,12).

Although the Church in the early days of America had times of laxity in its spiritual life, the influence of revivals and evangelistic ministries were prominent during these times.

Through the mid 1700's, believers fought against declining morality and growing spiritual weakness. In a movement that has been called The Great Awakening, evangelists in many parts of the country preached dogmatically against sin. They proclaimed lost man's need for salvation and the Christian's need for reconsecration. Gilbert and William Tennent, Jr., Jonathan Edwards, Shubal Sterns, Daniel Marshall, and a host of others preached God's Word the length and breadth of the land.¹ This movement had a tremendous impact on the young American Church. In the New England States alone, between 30,000 and 40,000 people were saved, and over 400 new churches were built. Other areas of the country experienced this same dynamic growth. There was a renewed interest in missions, and new schools were built to train preachers for the rapidly expanding churches.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, another revival started which is sometimes referred to as The Second Awakening. Again evangelists traveled throughout the land preaching the Word, calling sinners to repentance and God's people to obedience. As in the first awakening, great numbers were saved and many new churches built. The latter part of this movement saw the rise of some of America's most famous evangelists, such as Charles Finney. These men were followed by the likes of Dwight L. Moody, and R. A. Torrey.

Spiritual Decline In The American Church

Whenever God's Word is honestly and forcefully preached, there is opposition and the early American Church was no exception. A number of church groups split over these revival movements. Many

churchmen opposed the revivalists because the ministers and evangelists lacked formal training. Some of these accusations may have been true, but God often uses such men when those with proper training lack the faith and spiritual life to serve Him.

In New England, a large group of liberals strongly opposed the revivals of the first Great Awakening. This group soon began to drift into Unitarianism.² By the time of the Second Awakening, this heresy already had a death grip on many New England churches. The situation had become so bad that, despite believers' protests, a man with strong Unitarian views was appointed professor of divinity at Harvard. This act was the starting point for Harvard's end as a Bible-believing school. In 1819 Andover Newton Seminary was founded to protest this compromise with heresy.³

Liberal Attacks On The American Church

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the liberal heresy had finally made its way from Germany to the United States. It was carried to America by her students who had gone to the prestigious seminaries of Europe. As always, the liberal attack was centered on the Scripture.

The idealistic philosophy of Immanuel Kant, when combined with the views of Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl, created a philosophical background favorable to a critical approach to the Bible.⁴

Unless the Bible can be made to seem unreliable at some point, liberalism can never get a foothold on a person, church, or school. Adoniram Judson Gordon, one of the giants of the Faith in the late 1800's said,

“We must take the Word of God literally unless there is something in the context explicitly indicating that it was intended to be taken figuratively.”⁵

To the great defenders of the faith, a literal (normal) interpretation of the Scripture has been the strongest protection against liberalism. Gordon realized how easily men can drift into liberal thinking when they

“The desire for acceptability made the first step of compromise seem necessary. Once the first step was taken, the trail went downhill rapidly.”

become careless with their doctrinal position. It was during his lifetime that many who were orthodox themselves began to openly recommend teachers and preachers who were liberals, thus leading less informed believers to follow them into heresy.⁶ These heretics brought prestige and scholarship into the American Church, but they also brought spiritual destruction as well. The desire for acceptability made the first step of compromise seem necessary. Once the first step was taken, the trail went downhill rapidly.

Some men stood valiantly against this slowly increasing trend of liberalism. Charles H. Spurgeon, often called The Prince of Preachers, warned against the laxity in the Church concerning doctrinal error.

Complicity [i.e. compromise] with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it...confederacies founded on the principle that all may enter, whatever view they hold, are based on disloyalty to the truth of God. If truth is optional, error is justifiable.⁷

This statement, made over 85 years ago, has a very timely message for the Christian Church of today. If, like the men in the early American Church, we ignore this warning, the same fate that befell their spiritual descendants will, if the Lord tarries, befall ours.

The Unitarian movement and other heresies were to sweep through the New England portion of the Church so thoroughly that today few of the old churches in that area of America even consider themselves Christian. How sad a condition for the birthplace of the once vibrant American Church.

The Liberal Attack On The Schools

While the great universities in Europe were teaching the type of philosophical thought that would result in today's liberal theology, the schools in America were still Church-oriented and Bible-based. There were no famous theologians, scholars, or prestigious institutions of learning in America when the new liberal thought began to trickle to her shores.

Harvard, the oldest college in America, was a small New England school when it tried to gain wider recognition by accepting a scholar on its faculty who had Unitarian leanings. Princeton and Yale at that time, like most of America's schools of higher learning, were run by simple men of faith, often more preacher than educator. The Bible was the authoritative Word of God in these schools, and it was held to be inerrant and literally true.

But the lack of prestige and scholarship made these schools susceptible to those bringing new theological thought from Europe. It was not a desire to taste false doctrine, but a desire for acceptability and recognition that made America's great citadels of the Faith open their doors to teachers holding a weak doctrinal position.

In early America, the infiltration of heresy was slow, but steady. First, believers who felt that a more intellectual approach to Bible study was needed were added to the staff. Later, professors were added who would present a few new, but not too radical ideas — within the context of the faith, of course. At this point, men like Spurgeon raised their voices, but were ignored and ridiculed with the use of such terms as intellectual honesty, up-to-date methods, and the need for real scholarship in the churches. Those who opposed this dangerous trend were reminded that truly educated men were open-minded and tolerant, although of course not compromising in the major areas of the Faith.

In this way, little by little during the 1800's, liberal ideas crept into America's schools that were once solidly Biblical. And by the latter part of the century those on many faculties who voiced

opposition to the trends found themselves in the minority. The appeal of liberal theology to the human intellect and its glorification of human reason, always spell special danger for Christian schools. The liberal attitude was always marked by a spirit of open-mindedness, a supposed tolerance, and a so-called devotion to the truth. It carries other themes: devotion to science and scientific methods; a feeling that theological differences are insignificant; a concern for likeness rather than difference and opposition.⁸ These high-sounding liberal ideas always point out a disregard for the Scripture, put emphasis on experience rather than faith, and a trust in man's ability rather than God's. But often the desire for a higher degree of scholarship hides the danger of these new thoughts from the eyes of those responsible for the doctrinal soundness and spiritual safety of the Church's schools.

“The appeal of liberal theology to the human intellect and its glorification of human reason, always spell special danger for Christian schools.”

By the late 1800's, many schools in America were already being strongly undermined by heresy. And by the beginning of the twentieth century, many Christian leaders began to realize that there was serious trouble at hand. Some fought staunchly, but with little support, due to the disinterest on the part of the believers. Their battle was a losing one. Yale, Harvard, and Union were already lost and turning out heretics to preach in the churches. Princeton was soon to follow.

When the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy hit the headlines in the 1920's and 1930's, the battle had already been lost, not in the church councils and organizations, but in the schools. During those years of the early 1900's, many of America's greatest men of the Faith did battle with the modernists. But the sad truth was that,

Many Bible-believing men and churches looked with continuing distrust at church fights, convention harangues, and

the like. An uncounted number of these continued to hold the faith but refused to fight, take stands, vote issues.⁹

Ultimately, those who fought against modernist trends either were put out of their churches and schools, or voluntarily left in complete disgust at the heresy which they could not stamp out.

Despite the loss of their organizations, the Fundamentalists continued to contend for the Faith. All over America small groups of believing Christians joined together. Churches began to meet in homes and rented halls, and Bible Schools were built. Among denominations such as the Baptist, where churches owned their own buildings, whole churches often left the denominations. So by the mid-1930's the battle for the old-line denominations and schools was about over. These institutions, which had been the conscience of the great American Nation, were lost to the liberals of that day. It must be admitted as sad, but very true that,

Protestantism of the old line heritage stood by while the liberals, in the name of love and unity, gentlemanly conduct, and understanding, captured the leadership posts, the offices, the schools, the seminaries and the publishing houses.¹⁰

With the old groups and schools lost, the battle for the souls of men was carried on by those who, at great cost, refused to be led away from the truth.

In the decade before World War II, Fundamentalists established Bible schools all over America. Some seminaries and colleges were also founded. New mission boards began to operate and missionaries preaching the Gospel encircled the globe.

There were still many believers in the old line denominations. Many were leaders whose strength would have greatly helped the Fundamentalist cause. They stayed because of a desire to save their denominations, but they were doomed to failure. They did not make a dent in the downward trend of their liberal-controlled groups. These were fine Christian men and good teachers who loved the Word. But they would not face the truth.

W.A. Chandler, a Bible-believing Methodist, stayed with his group in the hopes of bringing it back to the Scripture. He founded Emory University which, in a relatively short time was taken over by the liberals that controlled his denomination.

Russell Conwell, a gifted preacher among Baptists, also stayed in his convention and founded Temple University and Baptist Temple Church. Less than 25 years after his death, both of these institutions were already denying any semblance of the faith their founder so loved. The spiritual heritage of these men, left among the heretics of the denominations, did not long outlive them.

Today, the very denominations they tried to save form the basis for the World Council of Churches. Their sons and daughters did not defend the faith, but were overcome with the heresies of the spiritually bankrupt one-world church movement. This organization is led by apostate men who deny every tenet of the historic Christian faith and push ecumenism at any cost. This is the price of compromise and silence. In the words of men like Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who preached so long ago:

Controversy for the truth against error of the age is, we feel more than ever convinced, the particular duty of the preacher in this present crisis. Our spirit is, we hope, one of genuine love to all chosen of God, but the rule of charity, that requires us to keep certain points in the background, we utterly abhor. It is treason to the Lord Jesus Christ to be silent on any point where He has spoken, and where the honor of His Gospel is concerned. It is of course most easy... to deal in generalities, to denounce sectarianism and claim to be of ultra-catholic spirit... Friends chide us and foes abhor us... but what do these things matter if the Master approve?¹¹

And so most of the great religious institutions which once formed the backbone of America fell to the heresies and apostasy that came from Europe. The work of defending the faith and chiding the nation was left to those few who were willing to leave their apostate groups in order to contend for the truth.

NOTE: We see this same trend which destroyed the faith of America's early schools in our Christian schools today. The Fundamentalist movement was strengthened greatly by Bible Schools which had been founded by men whose lack of accreditation and prestige in the educational community had been a sore point for some of the boards and faculties of these schools. So in 1947 godly men formed the Association of Bible Colleges with the purpose of standardizing and improving programs and giving recognized status, including listings in government publications.¹²

Unfortunately, this movement transferred from schools to the accrediting association certain decisions concerning teacher qualifications. The academic qualifications completely took precedent over the spiritual ones to meet accrediting requirements. Since power to grant or refuse accreditation makes any accrediting association almost dictatorial in matters of faculty qualifications, it was shocking for us to read the following report under the title "Bible College Accrediting Agency 'Comes of Age,'"

The American Association of Bible Colleges "came of age" on January 1, 1976, when it became a participating member of the council of Postsecondary Accreditation (The new name of the merged federal Regional Accreditation Commission on Higher Education and National Commission on Accrediting.) It thereby assumes its rightful place among institutions of higher learning, according to Dr. John Mostert, executive director.¹³

And so as American Christians sleep on, proudly secure in their accredited Bible Colleges, many decisions concerning the curriculum and faculty qualifications of these schools now rest on men who are not even believers. Yes, the schools can always leave the Association if they feel they are being compromised. But would any be willing to face the shame of losing this coveted prize after having fought so hard for recognition in the world of education?

Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets (Luke 6:26).

The desire of schools for recognition in the educational world has caused most of them, sooner or later, to slip into liberalism and apostasy. We fear for these once-great Christian schools that contend so strongly for academic recognition that they can no longer contend so strongly for the faith.

Notes

¹Earl E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954) pp. 400-401.

²Ibid, p. 402.

³Ibid, p. 454.

⁴Ibid, p. 445.

⁵A.J. Gordon, *The Watchword* (October, 1879) as quoted by G.W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville, South Carolina: Bob Jones University Press, 1973) p. 20,21.

⁶Ibid, p. 21

⁷As quoted by Dr. G. Archer Weniger, *The Blu-Print*, (9/16/75).

⁸John Dillenberger & Claude Welche, *Protestant Christianity* (New York: Scribner's, 1945) pp. 211-212.

⁹G.W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville, South Carolina: Bob Jones University Press, 1973) p. 89.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹As quoted by Dr. G. Archer Weniger, *The Blu-Print* (10/28/75).

¹²G.W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville, South Carolina: Bob Jones University Press, 1973) p. 71.

¹³The Religious Caravan, *The Alliance Witness* (1/29/75) p. 13.

CHAPTER FIVE WHERE THERE IS NO VISION



Where there is no vision, the people perish (Proverbs 29:18).

In the Old Testament, God spoke to men through His prophets, and in these last days He has spoken to us through His Son (Heb 1:1,2). This revelation of God to man is recorded in the Holy Scripture (2 Tim 3:16). When man rejects this revelation, he is lost because there is no hope of reaching God on the basis of his own wisdom (1 Cor 1:21). In this chapter we will study a few types of liberal theology which show how distorted man's thinking concerning spiritual things becomes when he rejects the Gospel.

Liberalism is not a united group of scholars or theologians. To the contrary, it is a body of disagreeing, self-contradicting individuals. They have different systems and methods for arriving at “the truth.” The truth that each arrives at is often far different from that of his colleagues. But despite the diversity, there are underlying fallacies that all liberal theologies have in common.

Liberalism always prides itself in human intellect. Like Immanuel Kant, the liberal sees human reason as supreme. Even when liberals speak of supernatural revelation, human reason is used to determine when this revelation takes place. The liberal, like all who glorify human reason, holds a very low view of inspiration. To them, the Bible is either a good book, or a book through which God may choose to speak at times. But it is never the inerrant, fully-inspired Word of God.

Another common tendency among liberals is the deceitful manner in which they express their beliefs. This is a most important point which we will call to mind over and over again in our study of liberalism.

The liberal theologians have taken words which for centuries have expressed the true Christian faith and stripped them of all meaning. They use them only as symbols. This enables them to use a term such as “cross” without believing in a historic cross on which Christ died. This is possible because, to them, the word “cross” has become a blank symbol which can take on whatever significance each individual gives it. This allows liberal theologians to speak of salvation, hell, heaven, the saviour, sin, etc., even when he does not believe in their historic Christian sense. By using these words the liberal theologians sound like sincere Christians when, in fact, they do not believe any of the tenets of the faith.

For instance, Paul Van Buren, in his book *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*, says the present day problem is that the word “God” is dead. But this is alright, because we have all we need in the man Jesus Christ. But to Van Buren, Jesus Christ is an undefined symbol.

Jesus is a spiritual concept to which you can give *any meaning you wish, or whatever meaning would meet a particular need*. Thus, the believer must always say of the liberal, *it is not what he says, but what he means that is important*.

“...the believer must always say of the liberal, it is not what he says, but what he means that is important.”

The middle-of-the-road believer falls into the liberal’s trap when he says we will fellowship around Jesus Christ rather than around the Scripture. The liberal loves this approach, *for without the Scripture Jesus becomes an undefined symbol*. The liberal is glad to

fellowship around the Lordship of Christ since, without the Scripture to define the term, he can make it mean whatever he wants, and the Fundamentalist can do the same. When this happens, the message may sound alright to the Fundamentalist, but often means something very different to the liberal speaker. We will see this truth clearly as we study modern trends in theology and remind ourselves again and again that it is *not what they say, but what they mean that is important*. And we must remember that terms not defined by the Scripture become blank symbols to be filled in by the mind of man. We will see this more clearly when we look at Karl Barth’s Neo-Orthodoxy.

The Social Gospel

The theology of the Social Gospel became popular in European seminaries during the middle 1800’s. By the early 1900’s, men holding this view controlled most of the schools and seminaries, not only in Europe, but also in America. In America the leading exponent of this idea was Walter Rauschenbush, a teacher at Rochester Seminary. He wrote two books and joined with Washington Gladden and Charles Sheldon in preaching the ideas of the Social Gospel.¹ The Modernists, during the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy in America, were followers of the Social

Gospel. The main concepts of this unscriptural theology are the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. The following are the basic ideas behind this heresy.

1. The Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man

The Social Gospel teaches that God is the Father of all men and therefore all men are brothers. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- All men are sinners, Rom 3:23.
- Therefore man outside of Christ is under God's condemnation, Jn 3:16-18.
- Those who reject Christ are children of the devil, Jn 8:44; Acts 13:10.

2. Man is Slowly Getting Better and Better

The Social Gospel teaches that mankind is slowly getting better and better. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- Mankind is slowly getting worse and worse as the end of this age draws to a close, 2 Tim 3:1-5,13; 4:2-4.

3. There are Many Ways That Lead to God

The Social Gospel teaches that all religions are of equal value. They are just different ways by which man can reach God. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation, Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12.

4. Man will make a perfect civilization on earth

The Social Gospel teaches that man will form a perfect civilization on this earth through social programs aimed at eradicating evil. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- This world will become worse and worse, 2 Tim 3:13.

- God will call His people from this earth in the last days, 1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:51-57.
- God will make a new heaven and a new earth for His people, 2 Pet 3:10-13.

Conclusion

The Social Gospel, like all liberal theology, rejects a literal interpretation of the Scripture. It, therefore, has only the thoughts of men to guide it. World War I caused many leading theologians to leave the teachings of the Social Gospel. But others hung on, calling World War I “The War to end all wars.” However, with the start of the second world war, the Social Gospel was shattered as a popular teaching. Many liberal pastors still hold to this idea, not realizing that the theological world has passed on to other things. However, the thoughts of the Social Gospel can still be clearly seen in newer forms of liberal theology.

Neo-Orthodoxy

The prefix “neo-” means: new, modern, recent, or, *a modified form of*. In the case of Neo-Orthodoxy, the latter definition applies as liberal thinkers devised what appeared to be a modified form of the true faith. The teachings of Neo-Orthodoxy may sound like true Christianity, but it is as far from the truth as was the Social Gospel of the early 1900’s.

Karl Barth

Karl Barth, a German theologian, is the father of Neo-Orthodoxy. He had studied theology with some of the greatest liberals of his day. However, Barth was among the followers of the Social Gospel whose dreams of a man-made perfect society were shattered by World War I. At that time, he seems to have realized that man, without God was hopeless. So he modified his thinking and saw the need to bring man back to God and His Word. This sounds very orthodox but, as with

all liberal scholars, we must examine Barth's teaching to find out what he actually means by statements like, "we need to bring men back to God and His Word."

The Bible And Neo-Orthodoxy

The teaching of Karl Barth concerning the Scripture sounds very conservative, but it is actually quite liberal. Barth declared that the Bible is indeed the Word of God but only when, by a special act of God, the Bible reaches out to us and becomes a revelation. He said, "We have seen that, as so much printed matter, the Bible is not identical with God's Word. But at any moment God can make it identical."² According to Barth, the Bible becomes God's Word when man turns to the Scripture in a time of great need and God chooses to speak to him. For that instant the Scripture becomes the Word of God to that individual.

This may sound very inspirational. But the question arises, "How does man know when God is doing this 'from time to time' revelation?" One way, according to Neo-Orthodoxy, is to leave behind the historic positions of the Christian faith.

The way to escape from a doctrinaire and static view of the Word of God is at each point to recollect that the Word of God is Jesus Christ...God is the Lord of the Word. He is not bound to it, but it is bound to Him. He thus has free disposal of the verbal character of the Holy Scripture, He can use it or not, He can use it in one way or another.³

The teachings of Karl Barth, and the Neo-Orthodox theologians in general, are very hard to understand. But since Karl Barth is often presented as truly Christian, it is good for us to be familiar with at least four major points involved in Neo-Orthodox thought.

1. The Bible is SOMETIMES the Word of God

The Neo-Orthodox theologians speak of the inspired Word of God, but they do not view inspiration in the historic Christian manner.

To the Neo-Orthodox, the Bible becomes God's Word only when man in his need reads it and God suddenly speaks to him through some portion of it. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for man, 2 Tim 3:16,17

2. Man's Reason is Supreme

Although he and his followers would vehemently deny it, Barth, for all his theological jargon, still clings to Kant's idea that man's reason is supreme. Barth's crisis revelation makes human reason supreme because man through his own feelings or rationale, is now going to have to decide, not only when God is speaking, but also what God means when He does speak. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- Man cannot by his own reason learn of God and the salvation He offers, 1 Cor 1:21; 2:4,5.

3. Neo-Orthodoxy Presents Christianity as Complex and Difficult

It has been stylish in recent years to be very kind to Karl Barth's theological thoughts and many claims are heard that he was misinterpreted. This allows the evangelical to seem intellectual without appearing to move from his own position.

Only by a failure to enter sympathetically into Barth's convoluted thought can we take these words to mean what they say on the surface.⁴ This is a common type of comment in use concerning Barth today.

The thoughts of Karl Barth, then, are not easy. To the contrary, they are complicated because he constantly changed them. He said, "To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have lived often..."⁵

And Barth has changed his details often enough to leave most of us in doubt as to what he really meant, as well as what he really said. Karl Barth and his Neo-Orthodox followers seemed to feel that, because life was complicated, Christianity could not be simple and at the same time meet man's need. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- That it takes the faith of a child to accept the truth of the Scripture, Matt 18:3.
- Faith, not wisdom, is the basis by which man must meet a Holy God, Heb 11:6.
- Faith makes real to us the spiritual truths we cannot grasp in any other way, Heb 11:1.

4. Neo-Orthodoxy presents Biblical terms as meaningless symbols

The Neo-Orthodox view sets the modern trend of dressing up liberal thought in orthodox language. The idea that God has “free disposal of the verbal character of the Holy Scripture” really means that until God chooses to speak, the written Word has no real spiritual meaning. Therefore, one cannot equate the words of the Bible with the Word of God in a true sense. In order to retain the language of orthodoxy, the Neo-Orthodox theologian re-interprets Bible terms, attaching non-biblical meaning to them.

The Neo-Orthodox theologian can speak of the resurrection when he believes Christ is still in the grave because he sees this not as an event but as symbolism. Barth says,

The resurrection is the non-historical relating of the whole historical life of Jesus to its origin in God...The resurrection is no historical occurrence.⁶

So the followers of Neo-Orthodoxy speak of “Original Sin,” “Adam,” “The Fall,” “The Second Coming,” and “Redemption in Christ.” But on examination, we find they do not accept these things as facts. And so it goes with every basic truth of the Christian faith. None is to be taken in the literal sense, but all are *symbolic* to the

reality of sin and pride in human life. So we are faced with the constant need to remember that it is not what the liberal theologian says, but what he means that is important. These men sound like believing Christians, when in reality they deny almost every fundamental of the Christian Faith.

Conclusion

With the teaching of Karl Barth, the modern trends in theology burst into full bloom. We see these systems wandering back and forth between the two-world idea of Kant and the nothing-is-sacred, continual changes of Hegel. We find the personal God, Creator of the universe, being pronounced dead. We find the Bible being pronounced spiritually true, but historically and factually false. In effect, we find that the new theologies, like the old, have left man without hope because they cannot accept in simple faith the Gospel which gives men hope in Christ (Eph 2:11-13).

Notes

¹Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954) pp. 462-463.

²Karl Barth "Church Dogmatics I", p. 255, as quoted by H.R. Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1937) p. 279.

³Ibid, pp. 276-277.

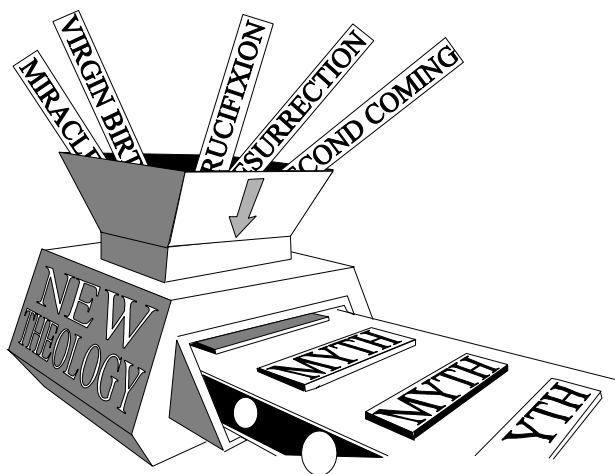
⁴Karl Barth, Romans, p. 195, as quoted by H.R. Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1937) p. 292.

⁵Ibid, p. 253.

⁶H.R. Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1937) p. 292.

CHAPTER SIX THE NEW THEOLOGY

“Myths are true”



The New Theology was a natural outcome of the failure of Neo-Orthodoxy to meet man’s spiritual need. As we have seen, the Neo-Orthodox theologians refused to accept by faith that the Bible is literally God’s Word. They saw it as a religious historical book filled with myths and errors. Some men developed theories for removing these errors. We heard of “demythologizing the Scripture” and the so-called “Search for the Historic Christ.” All of these ideas were doomed to failure, unable to meet man’s spiritual need. Following the failure of Neo-Orthodoxy and its off-springs to provide the answer to man’s spiritual need, the New Theology was developed.

One of the leading proponents of the New Theology was Bishop John A.T. Robinson of the Church of England. His books, written in a very popular style, give a clear indication of the blasphemous trend of this theology. As we look at the various aspects of this teaching, we will draw examples from the books written by this man.

1. “The Bible Contains Myths, But the Myths Are True”

The followers of the New Theology refuse to accept a literal interpretation of the Bible. They see it as a book of religious sagas, analogies and myths. But in order to keep from saying the Bible is not true, they say that myths are true. By this they really mean that while the actual events described in the Bible never happened, the moral truth it teaches is good, therefore it is truth.

In his writings, Bishop John A.T. Robinson compares the Holy Scripture’s account of Adam and Eve to the British comic strip called “Andy and Flo.” He said the comic strip characters are real, not because we can visit them at some address, but because we recognize them and there is a little of Andy in each of us. “Its the same with Adam and Eve. They are real, not because they were actual people; but because they tell us something profoundly true about ourselves.”¹

The Bishop continues on by concluding, “Can we then, after all, so readily assert that history is true and myths are false? Must we not rather say: History records what did happen; myths describe what is true? Adam and Eve, Andy and Flo, are myths because they describe what is true.”²

The New Theology concludes, then, that God lied when He inspired Moses to write that there was a first man named Adam. But this is alright because the account teaches us a moral truth. **BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:**

- God is not like man and will not lie, Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Titus 1:2.
- The Bible, being God’s Word, is truth, John 17:17.

Following this idea that myths are true, the New Theology goes on to reinterpret virtually every doctrine of the Christian faith.

2. “The Virgin Birth and the Miracles of Christ Were Never Meant To Be Accepted As Factual Happenings”

The New Theology teaches that the virgin birth and the miracles of Christ were never meant to be taken as literally true. Supposedly, these things were added to the Scripture by the writers in order to help people from an earlier more superstitious age understand the message of love.

Dr. Robinson refers to the virgin birth and the miracles of the Scripture as stumbling blocks and declares that they should be removed in order to make the Bible more understandable. He states,

I am ready to regard as expendable anything that for men and women today makes [The Bible] unreal — even if it has helped a lot of people in the past.

For instance, many today are put off by a way of thinking which was no stumbling block at all to the men of the Bible. They naturally thought of God as being ‘up there’ or ‘out there’ and the idea of a heavenly being ‘sending’ his son to the world was perfectly acceptable to an age which thought of God as paying visits to the earth.

And concerning the virgin birth, if it helps...well and good. But if it merely succeeds in convincing you that he [Christ] was not ‘one of us’, then it’s much better that you shouldn’t believe it...I’d rather you suspend judgement than let it become a stumbling block.³

BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- The writers recorded the facts they had witnessed and did not write myths or fables to convince people concerning their message, 2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1,2.
- Both the Jews and Greeks of that earlier and more superstitious age found the account of the cross to be a stumbling block, yet it

was not removed so they would accept the rest of the message, 1 Cor 1:23.

- And the idea of God sending His Son to the world was not acceptable, even at the time of Christ. To the contrary, the Scripture says Jesus was crucified for making this very claim, Mark 14:61-64.

3. “The Crucifixion Was Just An Example of Love”

The New Theology teaches that the cross was just an example of how far one should go in expressing love. Exactly how an innocent man’s dying as a criminal, to no real purpose, showed love is not explained by the men who follow the New Theology. The cross is seen as some kind of a cruel twist of fate unplanned and unwanted. Bishop Robinson declares that Christ did not want to die on the cross. “Not that he wanted it this way for himself—God! how he didn’t want it.”⁴ BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- The very purpose of Christ’s coming was to die in order to ransom mankind from the penalty of sin, Matt 20:28; 1 Tim 2:6.
- Jesus predicted His death, burial and resurrection comparing it to Jonah in the belly of the whale, Matt 12:38-40.
- God the Father sent His Son to die in the place of sinners and save them by His blood, Rom 2:25; 5:9.
- Through faith, man’s sin is forgiven and he is redeemed from its penalty through the blood of Christ, Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 1 Pet 1:18,19.

4. “The Resurrection Was Not a Physical One; Christ’s Body Is Still In The Tomb”

The New Theology teaches that Christ did not rise from the dead, but is still in His tomb. However, His great act of love on the cross so inspired the disciples that His message and love rose anew in their hearts. With the resurrection account we see so clearly the

way in which the New Theologian ignores the direct statements of the Scripture. Bishop Robinson says,

Precisely what happened to the body we shall never know. The New Testament is silent — and we may be silent too.⁵

Although admitting that the Apostle Paul believed in the physical resurrection, Robinson claims it was not central to Paul's teaching. "I have no doubt he accepted it [the resurrection] but it was not central for him."⁶ BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- Far from being encouraged by the events of the crucifixion and resurrection, the disciples were a frightened, discouraged, disbelieving group of men, John 20:19.
- Far from being silent about the resurrected body of the Lord, the Scripture clearly states that Jesus appeared to the disciples and claimed a physical resurrection, asking them to touch Him, Luke 24:33-40.
- The disciples testified that they saw the scars of the crucifixion on the Lord's body and that He ate with them, John 20:27; Mk 16:14; Luke 24:42-43.
- Paul wrote that the Resurrection was indeed central to the Gospel. He stated that if there was no physical resurrection, the Apostles were all liars, the Gospel worthless, and believers to be pitied above all creatures on the face of the earth, 1 Cor 15:12-19.

5. "The Return of Christ Has Already Taken Place"

Perhaps nowhere does the heresy, blasphemy, and ridicule of the New Theologians reach such heights as when they address the Scripture's teaching concerning the Second Coming of Christ. The assertion is always made that no intelligent Christian believes that there will be a physical return of Christ. In fact, Robinson clearly states that Christ's Second Coming has already taken place. To him,

“The Second Coming” has happened in the return of Christ in the Spirit.⁷

The Second Coming of Christ, according to the New Theologian, is just another myth in the Scripture. The Bible is just drawing pictures to make clearer the truth that Christ must come into everything. Although Robinson has stated that the Second Coming has already happened, he enters into typical liberal double talk when he goes on to say that “the second coming really means that at any moment Jesus may come walking into your life.”⁸ BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- Jesus promised to return and take His followers to be with Him, John 14:3.
- At the time of his ascension, the promise was given that he would return as He had left, Acts 1:10,11.
- Believers are to look for the Lord’s future return. By doing so they will be encouraged to live a godly life, Phil 3:20; Titus 2:13.
- In the last days men will scoff at the idea of the Lord’s return to earth, 2 Peter 3:3,4.

6. “Hell is Not a Place Beyond the Grave”

Explaining the New Theology’s position on hell, Dr. Robinson says that hell, as a place of eternal punishment for the wicked, has pretty well disappeared from the preaching programs of the church. And he states further, “I thank God that it’s gone. Not even Billy Graham wants to preach hell-fire in the old style.”⁹ He states further, “And the idea that God creates anyone for eternal damnation — let alone takes delight in it — is in itself damnable.”¹⁰

We see in these last two statements a common liberal attempt to cast doubt on the validity of the Scripture by misrepresenting what it teaches.

The New Theology's explanation concerning hell is not all that new. It falls back on the old modernist theme that hell is just man's suffering on earth. Dr. Robinson states,

The trouble has been that both heaven and hell have been pictured as places rather than states, and located simply on the other side of death. Of course for the Christian, they are realities that are not ended by death. But all he can usefully say about them is from present experience.¹¹

A careful examination of the foregoing explanation of hell discloses the usual twisted, fanciful explanation which modern theologians indulge in while attempting to make Christianity easier to understand.

Heaven and hell are both called experiences here on earth rather than places beyond the grave. However, having clearly established this fact, the New Theologian goes on to explain that for the Christian they are realities beyond death. One must wonder, if they do not exist beyond death but are experiences in this life, how they can still be realities beyond the grave.

However, the basic thrust of the New Theology is clearly seen in the explanation of hell. All man can really know about it, they say, is from present experience. And like the philosopher Immanuel Kant, the New Theology sees man's experience as supreme and offers no hope beyond this. Therefore the religion of Bishop Robinson and his fellow theologians can offer no hope beyond the grave. **BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:**

- Hell is a reality after death, a place where the wicked will be eternally punished, Ps 9:17; Rev 20:15; Matt 23:33.
- God does not take delight in sending men to Hell but longs for them to accept His salvation, Ezek 18:23; 33:11; 2 Pet 3:9.

7. "God Is Whatever Is Important In Your Life"

When the New Theology explains its view of God we can easily understand all the rest of its blasphemy. In truth, these men are not

only unbelievers but they are also atheists! They do not believe in God!

Dr. Robinson has written, “They have spoken as though what makes the world go round were an old man in the sky, a supernatural person...of course they don’t take that literally, it only helps to make God easier to imagine.”¹²

The New Theology, then, does not believe in a supernatural Being who created the world and all that is in it. There is no being who is all-powerful, righteous, and holy. There is no great Creator who loves mankind with an eternal, never-ending love and longs to save man from sin and restore him to fellowship with Himself.

Starting from that premise, Robinson goes on to construct a god which fits human reason.

So let’s start, not from a heavenly being whose very existence many would doubt. Let’s start from what actually is most real to people in everyday life — and find God there.¹³

Using the reasoning of Immanuel Kant, the New Theology sees man as being immature if he needs anything outside of himself. He says,

Men have run to God, expected Him to intervene or correct the balance (here or here-after) in a way that has merely revealed their emotional immaturity.¹⁴

If there is no God, what does the Scripture mean when it speaks of Him throughout its sixty-six books, written over a period of hundreds of years? Bishop Robinson explains these not in terms that are new, but in the same terms of the modernists of the early twentieth century.

God is to be whatever is important in the human life, and in the New Theology love is most important. Since Christ is said to be the greatest example of love, the Christian is anyone who makes “that love” the most important thing in his life. So the New Theology has taken the Bible’s statement that God is love and made it Love is God.

God, then, is not a personal being but a feeling, or emotion, and perhaps its accompanying action. However, as one reads through the writings of Bishop Robinson his own confusion becomes very apparent. For after establishing that Love is God, he later changes his mind and says that the word God relates to whatever is most deeply true and real, to what is of ultimate concern and significance. It is whatever you find most important to you. In other words, God is what you make him. BUT THE BIBLE SAYS:

- Before man existed, God existed; He existed before the beginning of the universe. Therefore what God is could have nothing to do with what man thinks about Him, Gen 1:1; John 1:1-3.
- God is a spirit and is to be worshiped as set forth in His Word, John 4:24; 17:17.
- In the final day, He will judge mankind, Rom 2:16, Heb 9:27.

Conclusion

We see then that the New Theology is not a theology at all. Men holding this position are really atheists, because they do not believe in God. They speak as though they believe and in their writings they capitalize the word “God” referring to Him by personal pronouns. And in this lies one of the greatest dangers of the New Theology. They use Scriptural terms, but they do not believe what the Scripture says. They use the words of the historic Christian faith, but have given them different meanings. There is no way to hold dialogue with such apostate men. It is virtually impossible to communicate with them on spiritual matters, since they constantly change their meanings of Bible terms. We must remember: it is not what the liberal says, but what he means. And the message of the New Theology is apostasy and spiritual death.

Notes

¹H.R. Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1937) p. 20,21

²Ibid, p. 21.

³Ibid, pp. 28,29.

⁴Ibid, p. 35.

⁵Ibid, p. 39.

⁶Ibid, p. 38.

⁷John A.T. Robinson, *In the End God* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1968) p. 77.

⁸John A.T. Robinson, *But That I Can't Believe* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1967) p. 41.

⁹Ibid, p. 42.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 47.

¹¹Ibid, p. 48.

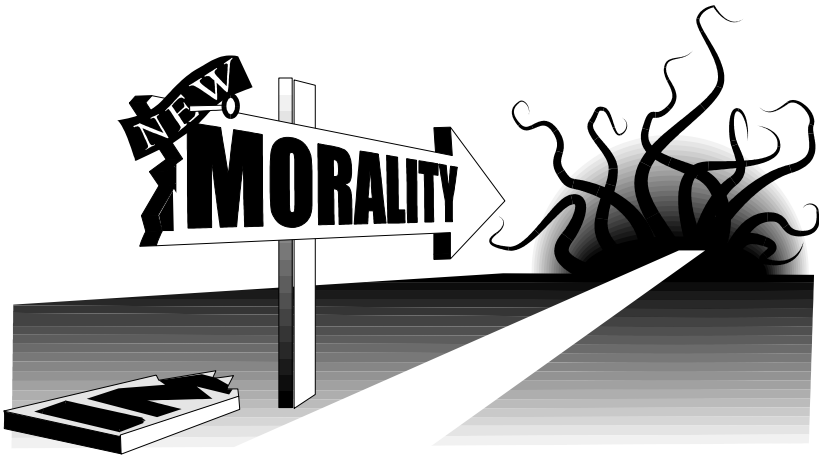
¹²Ibid, p. 52.

¹³Ibid, p. 51.

¹⁴Ibid, p. 59.

CHAPTER SEVEN SITUATION ETHICS

“The New Morality”



Introduction

Bishop John A.T. Robinson popularized the term “New Morality” in a widely sold book entitled *Honest to God*. Within two years of its publication, this book sold nearly one million copies in various languages around the world. This was followed by a more scholarly work called *Situation Ethics*. This was written by Joseph Fletcher, a professor of Social Ethics at an Episcopal Seminary in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Although they teach on different levels these men present the same idea concerning morality. However, it was Robinson’s more popular style of writing that brought the

general public's attention to these ideas. It is also in his writings that the liberal heresy behind the teachings of the New Morality can be so clearly seen. Situation Ethics, or the New Morality, has received its most adverse attention because of the permissiveness of its sex codes. However, the entire system is non-biblical, finding the basis of its ideas in the heresy which we have considered under the topic, "The New Theology."

Basic Principles Of Situation Ethics

Ethics

Ethics is a system that classifies action as good or bad. Christian ethics is based on the Bible's classification of such actions. An ethical system, then, is a set of moral guidelines for human action. On this basis, Situation Ethics does not meet the qualifications needed to be an ethical system. It does not classify any action as good or bad until after such action has already been taken. Therefore, Situation Ethics is not really a set of guidelines for human action.

Man Bound by Nothing

The idea of Situation Ethics is that man will refuse to be bound by any principle. He will see nothing as being right or wrong in itself. Although the one holding to Situation Ethics does not deny that there are principles, he refuses to be bound by them. According to Fletcher, the only thing that is intrinsically good is love; and this is the ultimate norm of Christian decision. That is, the only thing by which we must be bound.¹ These men constantly refer to the Scripture, but in every instance they prove a lack of understanding and constantly pervert the Word of God. The Scripture, very clearly does set principles and teaches us that men are bound to them. Christ Himself believed He was bound to do the will of the Father and to fulfill the Law (John 4:34; Matt 5:17). The Apostle Paul saw it as a Christian duty to abstain from the desires of the flesh (1 Cor 9:27). He warned believers that immorality should not be a part of the

Christian life because it destroys both physical and spiritual well being (1 Pet 2:11; 1 Cor 6:18).

However, in the usual manner of liberal theologians, those teaching the New Morality just ignore, or reinterpret any Scripture that disagrees with their ideas. According to the Situationalists, since there is no right or wrong in itself, every person must work out a decision in every situation. There are principles, but they can only guide, never vote. In other words, no one, not even the Scripture, has a right to tell someone that something is wrong in itself! One needs to just love his neighbor. To love one's neighbor means, to the Situationalists, to do whatever is best for the other person.

In Situation Ethics, as in all liberal thought, human reason is left as supreme. It is man who decides what is right and what is wrong on the basis of his own concepts. One might wonder just how qualified man is to determine what is best for his neighbor with nothing to guide him but his own feelings. But in the usual liberal manner this problem is completely ignored.

Proof that man is really not qualified to decide what is best for his neighbor is found in three illustrations used by Joseph Fletcher to prove that immorality can be moral. First he gives an account of the seduction of a maiden lady. This is good, according to the situationalists, because it saved her from becoming spinsterised, and rekindled her hope for marriage. Then, an act of prostitution is called moral, because it is aimed at helping a man overcome his problems. And third, an act of adultery is condoned because it is aimed at helping a man overcome sexual perversion.²

“According to the Situationalists,....neither any person, nor even the Scripture has a right to tell someone that something is wrong in itself!”

Now in all three of these cases, the outcome of the action will obviously not only fail to help, but will increase the problems of those involved. An examination of these illustrations would cause

most people informed in the area of counselling and psychology to agree that the problem would not be solved by such remedies, only compounded.

We must conclude that the Situationalist's assumption that man will always make proper moral decisions is false. The Bible confirms this conclusion teaching that those who reject the truth of the Scripture will make wrong decisions concerning religious and moral matters (Rom 1:21-32).

Bishop John A.T. Robinson has been very unhappy that people have felt that he was teaching immorality. He claims he just wants people to be free to make their own decisions. But in Robinson's definition of terms, we can see where the teaching must lead. Chastity, according to Situation Ethics, is not abstinence and self-control, but honesty in sex. And love is giving yourself to a person completely and without condition, without keeping anything back.³

After reading such statements, can anyone honestly question where this would lead young people? Perhaps many of these men did not intend to deliberately lead the world into immorality, but they are bound to do so by the very systems they devised. Having destroyed the absolutes of Scripture there is nothing left but a factless, nearly undefinable, man-made religious "non-system." Situation Ethics and the New Theology, from which it developed, expects people to apply their own factless faith to a factual world. As always, the end result of liberal theology is chaos, heartache, and the destruction of lives.

The Scripture says, "...the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps 111:10).

We can find no wisdom in anything the New Theology has to offer, because it not only lacks the fear of the Lord, but it fails even to recognize His existence. As we have already noted, the Scripture teaches that immorality is one of the results of a refusal to believe in the personal God of the Scripture (Rom 1:24). The Bible teaches that all immorality is not only sinful, but the most degrading of sins (1 Cor 6:18). The "myths are true" theology of today's liberals, which

denies the factual truth of the Scripture and the personal God who reveals Himself on its pages, can lead nowhere but to immorality and spiritual ruin.

Notes

¹Joseph Fletcher, as quoted by William Barclay, *Ethics in a Permissive Society* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1971) pp. 70, 71.

²Ibid, p. 72.

³John A. T. Robinson, *But That I Can't Believe* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1967) pp. 54-56.

CHAPTER EIGHT THE LIBERAL LEGACY



Introduction

The legacy of Liberal Theology is destruction, confusion and spiritual death. The Liberal Theologian rarely founds a school, a church, or a mission, but specializes in taking over those founded by others. Their appeal to human pride and their offer of an intellectual front, which brings acceptance by the world system, makes their message very appealing to the unwary. Look for a few moments at the results of some of the Liberal Theologians' so-called relevant presentations of "the Gospel."

Union Theological Seminary

Union was founded by Bible-believing Presbyterians in the 1830's and was one of the leading schools of theology in America. For seventy years it required the members of its faculty to take an oath to uphold the Westminster Confession of faith. In 1905, the board of trustees changed this definite commitment of faith to an ambiguous statement that all faculty members should satisfy the board as to their Christian life and faith.

No doubt the change in their doctrinal requirements was closely connected with the fact that one of Union's professors, C.A. Briggs, had been defrocked for heresy after his trial by the Presbyterian church. After this, Briggs was ordained by the Episcopal church and continued teaching at Union. Although the Presbyterian church severed all relationships with the school, Union graduates, poisoned with the heresies of men like Briggs, continued to pastor Presbyterian churches. This eventually led to the spiritual downfall of that great body, once so strongly committed to Jesus Christ and the Holy Scripture.

From that point on, Union Theological Seminary became one of the most radical liberal institutions in America. Among their teachers were men like the famous Harry Emerson Fosdick, who wrote, "Substitutionary atonement, where one suffers in the place of others...is in view of modern ideas of justice a moral outrage."¹ Following the usual intellectual snobbery of liberalism, Fosdick stated that he did not believe in the virgin birth or in the old fashioned doctrine of the atonement and did not know of any intelligent person who did.

For ten years, from 1950 to 1960, the famed liberal theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr was dean at Union. During the early 1900's this man was a leading figure in the Social Gospel. Later, becoming disillusioned with that position, he began to teach his own system of theology. And, as was true of the men of Union Theological Seminary for so many years, he built all his beliefs on human reason

and an interpretation of the Bible that makes it totally untrustworthy in the areas of history.

Dean Niebuhr said, “Religious faith is basically a trust that life, however difficult and strange, has ultimate meaning.”² Of course, as is true with all liberal theological jargon, it would no doubt take a book or two to explain exactly what this statement meant. So far as original sin is concerned, Niebuhr said that it is simply a problem of man’s pride which he will have to overcome. At times, as is true with most liberals, Reinhold Niebuhr sounded quite Biblical. He said, “The tragedy of mankind is that he can conceive of self-perfection, but he cannot achieve it.”³ And yet, admitting man’s failure to ever be perfect, even in a human sense, Reinhold Niebuhr rejected man’s only hope for perfection. He was an open critic of all who preached the traditional Gospel of salvation. He spoke out against the clergymen who offered salvation on what he called simplistic terms. “Their wholly individualistic conceptions of sin are almost completely irrelevant to collective problems of the nuclear age.”⁴

So, in rejecting a personal God and a personal salvation, this man with his associates, continued Union Theological Seminary’s heresy and apostasy.

One could write a whole book on the Liberal blasphemy that has been ushered from the once hallowed halls of Union Theological Seminary. But perhaps these utterances, now often muted to a whimper, will soon cease. For we read in one of America’s leading news magazines,

...but Union has fallen on troubled days lately, caught up in inflation, problems of faculty and student recruitment and divergent opinions on the direction the school should be taking...In recent years there has been an exodus of known names from Union...moreover the faculty and student body has been sharply reduced.⁵

This same news is confirmed in another magazine of wide circulation,

Money, internal dissensions, shifting patterns in the student body and possible loss of scholarly faculty are among the many problems facing this liberal seminary in New York City... Denominations supporting the seminary in the past are declining and are now neither producing candidates for the ministry nor providing openings for trained ministers.⁶

So we see the liberals themselves deserting the rotting hulk of a school which they have fed with their blasphemy and poisonous human pride. The churches which their trainees took from the “old fashioned Gospel” to the more “relevant” human thought they had learned at Union are now dead or dying. These churches no longer have the spiritual life necessary to challenge men into the ministry nor are there many pulpits available to the few who are willing to preach their brand of heresy. Union Theological Seminary has spawned a spiritual wasteland which is the normal liberal legacy.

The Episcopal Church, which so proudly ordained the defrocked heretic C.A. Briggs and thus enabled him to start Union on its downward spiritual trend, is also reaping the whirlwind of liberalism. In recent years the Episcopal Church in the United States has closed nearly 600 of its churches! The Episcopal Church has reduced its executive staff from 205 to 103 and is still experiencing a budget deficit.⁷ The board of the Episcopal Church in the United States has suggested reducing its seminaries from 11 to 7, and plans no new educational facilities.

Meanwhile, in neighboring Canada, that branch of the Episcopal Church that came to Union’s rescue when it supported the heresy of Briggs, finds itself also in deep trouble.

The Toronto Star recently reported that Sunday School attendance in Canada has dropped “catastrophically” in the past ten years. The newspaper said the overall decline is close to 50% with two churches, United and Anglican (Episcopal) reporting even greater losses....⁸

So not only is the liberal church of today dying, but the spiritual descendants of the liberals who so proudly led the church away from

the historic Christian faith, have no interest at all in being a part of the spiritual corpse their forebears' pride has left behind.

As it has already been noted, the Presbyterian church severed all connections with Union when it turned its back on the fundamentals of the faith. But because it continued to accept ministers from its ranks, its schools and churches were soon filled with Union's heresies. Little by little this great bastion of the Christian faith fell by the wayside. In recent years, this group has watered down its doctrinal statement until little in the way of definite doctrine exists.

“In 1967 the United Presbyterian Church broadened its body of creeds and loosened the vows required of new clergy.”⁹ It meant that Presbyterian ministers would no longer pledge to receive and adopt the Westminster Confession. The liberals presented this move as bringing the Presbyterian Church into the 20th Century. They implied it would bring no real doctrinal changes into the church.

However, in 1979 a local church which belongs to the United Presbyterian Church accepted Rev. Mansfield Kaseman as pastor in spite of his denial of Christ's deity and physical resurrection, and an avowed belief in the liberal theology which has caused death and destruction around the world. After lengthy battles, the Permanent Judicial Commission of the United Presbyterian Church voted that the local church was right in accepting this heretic as pastor. Their vote proved that heresy is no longer recognized by this once great Christian organization. In the words of one man, “The Presbyterian Church has ‘legalized apostasy.’”

So we see how the liberal doctrine, first spawned in Germany, has eaten away at the spiritual life of many churches. And its legacy is always the same. “In 1958, only 43% of the members of protestant churches in America attended Church, and by 1969, the figure had dropped to 37%.”¹⁰

The Ecumenical churches which follow the liberal theological thought, are having tremendous financial difficulties. The World Council of Churches called a special meeting in September of 1971 to consider their profound financial problem.

“So we see how the liberal doctrine, first spawned in Germany, has eaten away at the spiritual life of many churches. And its legacy is always the same.”

The National Council of Churches has begun to reorganize, in order to try and meet the financial crises it is facing. In 1971, church building reached a 13 year low. In 1969, E. Carson Blake announced that, “Only a miracle would save the radical committee on church unity,” a rather desperate position for a theologian who does not believe in miracles.

The latest edition of the authoritative *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* reports that protestant church membership is shrinking. It “reflected eroding membership in the mainstream liberal protestant denominations: The United Presbyterians, Episcopalians, United Methodist, the United Church of Christ (Disciples of Christ).” Not all aspiring protestant ministers are hunting for jobs. Evangelistic, Bible-oriented denominations... are still growing.¹¹

So we can conclude that as far as organizations are concerned, the “relevant theology,” preached by the liberals to a modern scientific world, has resulted in the near destruction of everything it has touched. How strange that in this highly technical world that cannot accept the Bible as the literal, inerrant, inspired Word of God, the only churches growing and not having financial problems are those teaching this old fashioned foolishness that no supposedly intelligent person would believe today! We read from a church report, “Only a few churches, the aggressive fundamentalist or conservative churches continue to get good financial support.”¹²

The destruction of schools and organizations is a terrible thing. But as we will see in the next chapter, it is almost as nothing when

we consider the destruction of the lives of young people, and the world as a whole, by these purveyors of liberal theology.

Notes

¹Harry E. Fosdick, *A Guide to the Understanding of the Bible* (New York: Harper, 1938) p. 50.

²Foster Stockwell, *The World Book Year Book*, 1972 (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1972) p. 492.

³ibid

⁴ibid

⁵Tidings, *Time Magazine* (6/24/74) p. 33.

⁶The Religious Caravan, *The Alliance Witness* (3/12/75) p. 13.

⁷Martin E. Marty, *The World Book Year Book*, 1972 "Protestant" (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1972) p. 483.

⁸The Toronto Star, as quoted by the Religious Caravan, *The Alliance Witness* (7/17/74) p. 13.

⁹*Time Magazine* (2/16/81) p. 52.

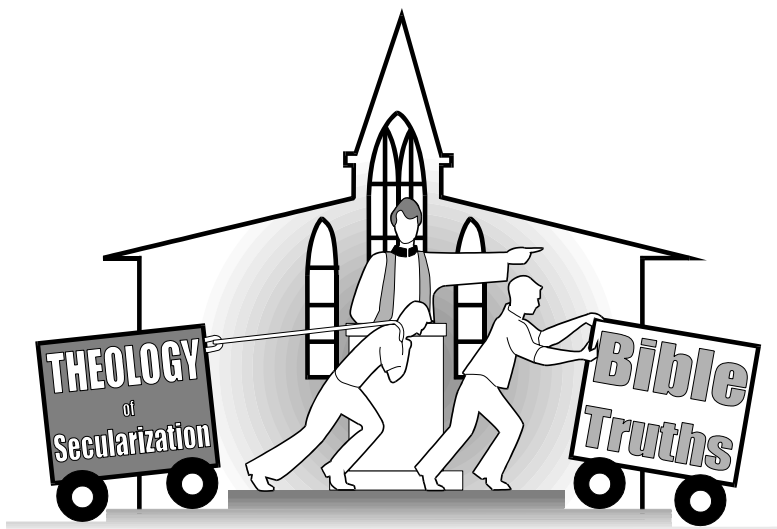
¹⁰Martin E. Marty, *The World Book Year Book*, 1971 (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1971) pp. 444-445.

¹¹The Pulpit Squeeze, *Time Magazine* (6/30/75) p. 36.

¹²Martin E. Marty, *The World Book Year Book*, 1971 (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1971) pp. 444-445.

CHAPTER NINE THE THEOLOGY OF SECULARIZATION

“God is Dead”



Introduction

The “liberal-legacy” is to leave schools and churches with no spiritual life and no real relevance so far as the average individual is concerned. Nothing brings out more clearly the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the “liberal-legacy” than the “Theology of Secularization.”

In effect, this theology was only able to come to the fore because of the ruin which liberal theologians had made of the once powerful

Gospel preaching churches and Bible-based schools. The theology of Secularization teaches that the church and religion are powerless to meet the needs of this present world. Therefore, the church and its teaching must be assimilated into the secular world where man, without religion, will work things out for himself. The spiritually blind liberals had led their students into a wall of disillusionment and frustration. The shock of realizing the emptiness of liberal “Christianity” has led men to seek something better.

We should notice that it is “church men,” rather than philosophers, who are trying to engineer the final and complete destruction of the Christian Faith. The truth then, is that the sons and daughters of the liberal theological movement have left the undefinable gospel of their predecessors for another and just as hopeless man-made system.

Its Origin

In 1965, Harvey Cox, associate professor of Church and Society in the Divinity School of Harvard University, published a book entitled, *The Secular City*. It took the world by storm and sold hundreds of thousands of copies. It was, according to the *Christian Century Magazine*, “A Christian acclamation of both the emergence of secular urban civilization and the breakdown of traditional religion.”

The secularist position certainly did not begin with the writing of this book, but the book has served to make this shameful denial of the historic Christian faith a very popular position.

“Secularists” are actually people who have no religion. While in the past they seemed to have been afraid to oppose the worship of God openly, this is changing. One commentator states that, “By the end of the century, committed Christians will be a conscious minority in the west, surrounded by arrogant paganism.”¹

The most shocking point to this whole presentation of secularization is not that it is now popular and out in the open, but that it claims to be the normal result of the religion of the Bible!

Some Basic Ideas Behind Secularization

God

The men who hold to this form of theological thinking are atheists as they do not believe in God. We see this confirmed in the teaching of Cox, who says,

God wants man to be interested, not in Him, but in his fellowman...But how do we name a God who is not interested in our fastings and cultic adoration but asks for acts of mercy? It is too early to say for sure, but it may well be that our English word God will have to die, corroborating in the same measure Nietzsche's apocalyptic judgement that 'God is Dead'.²

Remember to watch the liberal double talk! The Secularist speaks of his god with a capital "G" and refers to 'him' and 'he', but does not believe in a personal God. This is proven by a quote of C.A. VanPeursen, "The story of the word 'God',...is that it is given no meaning, but acquires a meaning in history...."³

So the god of the secularist is whatever man and his society and culture needs him to be!

The Church

The secularist demands that the distinction between the world and the church be erased. For these reasons, the theme of the second assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1954, was changed from "Christ the Hope of the Church and the World," to just "Christ the Hope of the World." And for this reason the WCC in 1961 removed the word "our" from in front of Lord Jesus Christ, as they

felt it was too restrictive and seemed to set the church off from the world.⁴

Evangelism

It has been the Theology of Secularization more than anything else which spawned the World Council of Churches' "Liberation Theology." Feeling that the physical problems of the world are the chief concern of the "Christian," the leaders of the WCC follow the secularists in giving the word 'evangelism' a new meaning. The evangelism of the secularist has nothing to do with calling men to repentance from sins and to faith in Christ. The new evangelism is social work among the poor with a new dimension added, namely, political activity. This is seen in the program of the WCC, attested to by its Uppsala '68 Report, an official paper formulated from its conference in Uppsala, Sweden in July of 1968.

The church, directly through its preaching and teaching, or indirectly through the influence of cultural values informed by Christian preaching and teaching, has played no small part in creating the spiritual ferment underlying the revolution of our time.... Radical change in power structures as the bearer of social justice and not violence, is the essence of the revolution. Yet violence is always potentially present and where established order dictates the decision regarding strategy, violence may appear the only way.⁵

So the WCC is carrying out the idea of the new theological thought of our day. "Evangelism," to the Bible-believing Christian means an effort to save lost mankind by preaching the Gospel of salvation through Christ. To the liberal, it means chaos, revolution, and death. To excuse these excesses in the name of Christianity, the WCC

"Evangelism," to the Bible-believing Christian means an effort to save lost mankind by preaching the Gospel of salvation through Christ. To the liberal, it means chaos, revolution, and death."

falls back again on the typical double talk of the liberal theologian.

Development is the new name for peace. But development is disorder, it is revolution. Can we attempt to understand this apparent paradoxical situation which would imply that disorder and revolution are the new name for peace?"⁶

The leaders of the WCC, as they endeavor to bring about change in society by revolution and the destruction of present systems of government and religion, have become one in purpose and action with the forces of Communism. This is evident not only in the many statements similar to the one above but also in the action of their leaders and the infamous "Program to Combat Racism."

A few years ago the Rev. Raul Macin who had pastored Methodist churches in Mexico for some twelve years resigned from his position to run for government office as a Communist! Having come under the influence of the WCC leaders he stated, "God is a human creation." He added further, "Even if the Church should become atheistic, it could not fulfill a lot of the Gospel requirements without Marxism [Communism]."⁷ Despite these words which shocked Mexican Methodists, he was given a welcome by the World Council of Churches officials at their headquarters in Geneva.

As a result of the WCC's communistic desire for a "radical change in the social structure" they have used mission money to openly ferment revolution! Groups in South Africa receiving WCC aid have slaughtered innocent men, women and children. Even missionaries of the Salvation Army, an organization affiliated with the WCC, have been murdered by these savage church-backed killers.

This action caused the eventual withdrawal of the Salvation Army from the WCC. But millions of Methodists and members of other mainline denomination churches continue to indirectly support this communistic action when they support their local churches.

What Is The Aim Of Secularization?

For his answer, Harvey Cox quotes one of his favorite theologians, C.A. VanPeursen, "...it is the deliverance of man first from religious and then from metaphysical control over his reason and his language."⁸ Cox himself then goes on to say,

...the breaking of all supernatural myths and sacred symbols...
Secularization occurs when man turns his attention away from
worlds beyond and toward this world and this time.⁹

As we come to understand the terminology of the secularist, we find that these statements assert that we must deny every basic doctrine of historic Christianity. Cox says the forces of secularization have,

...no serious interest in persecuting religion...it simply bypasses and undercuts religion and goes on to other things....It has convinced the believer that he could be wrong, and persuaded the devotee that there are more important things than dying for the faith.¹⁰

Harvey Cox obviously has no contact with fundamentalists, although he strikes out at this type of unshakeable faith from time to time. It seems clear, however, that in order to bring his idea of secularization to full fruition, the secularist is going to be forced someday to persecute the "unshakeable" fundamentalist.

By "believer" and "religion," Cox is no doubt referring to all religions. But in particular, he must have in his mind the only "Christian faith" he has ever known, that of the liberal theologian, because he says the currents of secularization are so strong that they,

...either express themselves in quasi-religious form or else elicit adjustments in religious systems which alter them so radically that they pose no threat to secularization.¹¹

This last statement is a perfect description of the WCC. It has allowed the forces of the world to so alter and control it that it not only is no threat to new forms of religious thought, but follows them like a hungry puppy follows the garbage man in the hopes of finding

anything to fill the empty void with which they have to contend. Despite the collapse of the bankrupt, godless communist system in many areas of the world, the leaders of the WCC churches continue to propagate the major points of this ideology. They will continue to do this until some other useless human attempt at world redemption catches their fancy. Having rejected the true and living God who reveals Himself in the Scripture, they have no hope and are forced to follow their humanistic way (Rom 1:19-23).

Finally, the secularist says that we have to find non-religious interpretations of the Bible. The claim is made that we must abandon the historic Christian position and give up hope that it will once again hold the central place in life that it once held.¹²

It seems quite likely that the secularist's theology is, in one sense, right. Christianity will probably never again hold the central position in nations like Britain and America as it once did. The Scripture says,

But evil men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim 3:13).

So the Scripture agrees that in the last days, those who would seduce the believer from the Faith will become bolder and more powerful. But contrary to the charge of secular theology, this is not reason for true believers to abandon their biblical positions. The Scripture says,

But continue in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim 3:14).

The evil and apostasy of our day is a sign of the return of the Lord, and the true believer should be encouraged to hold fast to the truth of the Holy Scripture.

The main inference of the secularist's last statement is completely wrong, that is, that the truth of the Gospel and the power

of the personal God of the Scripture will never again be central. The Scripture says,

...as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God (Rom 14:11,12).

And again,

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the God Father (Phil 2:10,11).

Now Harvey Cox, A.T. Robinson, and their fellow liberals, do not believe in the God of the Bible, or the coming judgement. However, God will not cease to exist just because these men refuse to believe, nor will the final judgement fail to come. Some day God's truth will again be as central as it was before the Fall, and Jesus Christ will be supreme. In that grand and glorious day, these apostles of deceit will spend eternity in the fires of Hell because of their rejection of the Gospel.

The Secularists Claim That The Bible Is Their Source.

The modernist of an earlier day tended to totally reject the Scripture, ridiculing it as useless. But the new theologian is far too clever for this approach. The "myths are true" theology has allowed the new theologian to keep the Bible and use it in his own way as a basis for his teachings.

Secularists claim that theologians have just recently discovered that they had been making a big mistake. The old idea of something "secular" as opposed to something "eternal" is not at all biblical.

From the very beginning of its usage, secular denotes something vaguely inferior. It meant 'this world' of change as opposed to the eternal 'religious world'. This usage already signifies an ominous departure from biblical categories. It implies that the true religious world is timeless, changeless,

and thus superior to the ‘secular’ world which is passing and transient.¹³

But the Bible says: this life is a passing, transient one as opposed to the eternal life in Christ. There is a difference between that which is secular, or of this world, and something that is eternal. Jesus Christ taught,

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matt 6:19-21).

So Christ is recognizing the passing and transient nature of “this world,” while recognizing the permanent nature of the eternal heavenly world. Theologians who taught this truth were not making a big mistake.

According to Dr. Harvey Cox, there are three major biblical points, each of which have given rise to and support one of the aspects of secularization. These Biblical points are:

1. The creation account which serves to bring about the disenchantment of nature.
2. The Exodus, which brings about the secularization of politics.
3. The Sinai Covenant, especially its prohibition of idols which brings about the deconsecration of values.

Because of this unbelievable premise that secularization is biblically based, Cox feels that the Christian should welcome the secularization process. But let us look at these three major points in the light of Biblical truth.

1. The Creation: Man’s Disenchantment With Nature.

Claiming to follow a Bible-based system, the secularist starts out by denying a basic Bible claim that God created man, walked with

him in fellowship and provided a means of salvation for him when he sinned. The secularist believes that,

Pre-secular man lived in an enchanted forest. Its glens and groves warm with spirits...Reality is charged with a magical power that erupts here and there to threaten or benefit man...Many historians of religion believe that this magical world view, although developed and organized in a very sophisticated way, never really broke through until the advent of biblical faith.¹⁴

According to this statement, man developed his own religion and his own god; and the God of the Hebrews and the Bible is just a part of this development.

When the secularist speaks of disenchantment with nature from the creation, we must not think he really believes in a God of Creation. He is simply saying that when the Hebrews developed the creation myth, god and man were no longer both part of nature, but man, god, and nature, became distinct from one another. God is seen as a product of man's reasoning process and not an actual living being; God is still created by man, not man by God.

To further our already documented claim that modern liberal theologians are atheistic, we note Harvey Cox's comments on the creation account of Genesis, "The Genesis account of creation is really a form of 'atheistic propaganda'." This story, according to the secularist, is just a means of showing the Hebrews that the old ideas of a semi-divine nature are not true. They are to learn a new myth — not nature, but Yahweh is the creator, and he stands outside of nature. The creation story supposedly showed the Hebrews that nature was not supernatural in itself. Man's relationship with God was not based on his relationship with the forces of nature because God stood outside of nature. This all sounds rather biblical, but in a true dialectic fashion, this is just a movement to a higher plane, a new synthesis. Superstitious man now worships a superior idea of god than he had before.

2. The Exodus, which brings about the desecularization of politics.

The Hebrews made a big step forward, according to the secularist, when they began to look for God in history rather than in nature. Accordingly, “this opens a whole new world of possibilities for political and social change.”¹⁵

At this point, the secularist misinterprets and disregards facts in an appalling manner to make the Bible appear to support his theory.

The secularist claims that the God of the Hebrews does not speak to them in thunder or other natural phenomena but in a historical event: the Exodus. And the Exodus was particularly significant in that it was an event of social change, a massive act of what we would today call “civil disobedience.”

But the Bible says: God spoke to Israel through Moses, not through history (Ex 3:2-7; 13-15). God called Moses, not through nature, but through supernatural means, and sent him to speak to the children of Israel. Over and over again in the life of Moses we hear him claim to speak for God.

The secularists claim the Bible as a basis for disobedience to governmental power.

But the Bible says: We are to be obedient to the government. The only exception to this command is when the government deliberately refuses to allow the believer to follow God. Moses went to Pharaoh, asking for permission to worship in the wilderness. Pharaoh refused this request (Ex 5:1,2). Then, despite a long series of supernatural phenomena, by which God showed His power, Pharaoh continued to refuse to recognize God or allow His people to follow Him. We might notice that the phrase “the Lord spoke to Moses,” is repeated over and over again. God was not teaching civil disobedience. God was speaking through Moses and demanding obedience to His Word.

The New Testament also speaks out against the revolution and civil disobedience that secularists teach. Christ taught that obedience should be rendered unto the government, even governments such as

the Roman Empire, which was, as far as the Jews were concerned, an oppressive colonial power. The Jewish leaders had hoped to catch Christ with a tricky question. Should taxes be paid to Caesar? If he answered yes, he would be a traitor to the cause of freedom among the Jews. If he answered no, he would be a rebel against the Roman government. Jesus answered, “Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s and to God the things which are God’s...” (Mark 12:17). With these words Christ recognized the need for civil government, as well as the truth that governments must allow freedom of worship.

In the Pauline Epistles, the same thing is clearly taught. “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power, but of God; the powers that be, are ordained of God” (Rom 13:1). This Scripture portion goes on to say that to resist civil government is to resist God and this will bring judgement (Rom 13:2). This submission includes paying taxes, as well as giving respect and honor to those in authority (Rom 13:6,7). The only cause ever given for disobedience to civil authority is when this authority refuses to allow the believer to maintain a witness and worship God as he sees fit. The statement that “evangelism can become revolution and secular unrest” shows us once again how the premise of the secularist is non-biblical in the extreme.

The secularist, who often sounds much like an anarchist, says that the Exodus,

...symbolizes the deliverance of man out of a sacral-political order and into history and social change, out of religiously legitimated monarchs and into a world where political leadership would be based on power gained by the capacity to accomplish specific social objectives.¹⁶

We note now the complete distortion of the biblical account to legitimize the theory of secularization and its accompanying revolutions and chaos. Again, we must look at what the Bible really says.

The secularists claim that from the Exodus on there was no leadership that was made legitimate by religious principles. This claim is false. We read that Moses was picked by God before he had accomplished anything. Joshua was picked by God to rule at Moses' death; again, his leadership was legitimized on a religious basis.

And Joshua the son of Nun, was full of the Spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him. And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses (Deut 34:9).

Now after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them... (Jos 1:1,2).

After Joshua's leadership and the settling of the Israelites in Canaan, there was no permanent central government. But God raised up leaders for the nation as needed. They were called Judges (Jud 2:16). They ruled and led with authority directly from God. This was a leadership based on Divine Authority not accomplishment.

Samuel was picked by God when he was still a child. Although Samuel was called a Prophet rather than a Judge, he was the ruler of Israel (1 Sam 3:8,9,20). When Samuel was old he then made his sons judges. They did not obey the Lord and were rejected by the people who then asked God to give them a king like other nations (1 Sam 8:4,5). Samuel prayed to Jehovah concerning the request of the people. God's answer was that the people were not rejecting Samuel's leadership but God's, "...for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam 8:7). Again we have the reaffirmation that God was Himself ruling the people. In no way can these words be understood to represent anything but a government whose positions of leadership were legitimized by God, or as the secularist would put it, by religion. Not only were the judges and prophets that ruled Israel chosen by God, but also when the Israelites' request for a king was granted it

was God who chose him (1 Sam 12:12,13). The Hebrew king, in the truest sense of the word, ruled by “divine right.”

It is clear then that this second pivotal element, which Cox claims as one of the biblical sources of secularization, has no biblical basis at all. Whether the Scripture is taken literally, as we take it, or figuratively, as the liberal theologian takes it, there is no basis for the assertion that beginning with the Exodus there was no longer any “divine right of rulers.”

3. The Sinai Covenant as the Deconsecration of Values

As we look at the third point on which Harvey Cox claims Bible support for secularization, we must remember to examine his teaching as we do all liberal thought. We must ask not what does he say, but what does he mean? God is constantly mentioned, but we must remember that the secularist does not believe in God. There are constant references to revelation, but this is not supernatural revelation. Revelation to the secularist is simply a process of man’s evolutionary development whereby he has learned as history speaks to him.

The secularist now claims that when God warned the Hebrews against idols, He was destroying the idea that values (morals and principles of life) came from God, or were in any way stable or divine. In this third area, Cox’s thinking becomes so contrary to the biblical basis he claims for it that he is very difficult to follow. He seems to be saying that when the God of the Hebrews did away with idolatry, he was demoting the gods. “The Bible does not deny the reality of the gods and their values, it merely revitalizes them.”¹⁷

This last statement is so full of non-biblical information it would be well to take it bit by bit:

1. *The Bible does not deny the reality of the gods...* Cox makes this statement, but does not bother to tell us where in the Scripture he gets this idea. As a matter of fact, the Scripture does clearly and definitely deny the reality of the gods. “For all the gods of the

nations are idols...” (Ps 96:5). The Hebrew word translated ‘idol’ here means a non-entity, good for nothing or a falsehood. Again, in Isaiah 37:19, we see reference to the burning of idols because they were not gods. In Jeremiah, the Lord charges the Hebrews with being less faithful to Him, the true and living God, than other people were to their gods that were, in fact, not gods (Jer 2:11). The New Testament continues this charge that the gods are not real. Acts 19:26 finds the people at Ephesus angry because the Christians are telling people that gods made with hands are not gods at all. So very obviously then, the Bible does deny the reality of gods other than Jehovah.

2....*and their values...* The next claim is that the Bible does not deny the reality or worth of the moral values of the gods. Again, this is just as far from the truth as the assertion that the Bible does not deny the reality of other gods.

The gods are described as shameful in many Scripture portions such as Jeremiah 11:13 and Hosea 9:10. They are called an abomination in a number of portions, such as Ezekiel 20:7 and 8. (Note: This word “abomination” used to describe the idols which were “before the eyes of the Israelites” means “filth.”) Again, by no stretch of the imagination or reinterpretation of the Scripture could anyone have a basis for saying these words show value in the moral precepts of these gods. There simply is no Scriptural basis for this contention.

3.....*it merely revitalizes them.* Cox says, “It accepts them (the gods) as human projections, as ‘the work of man’s hands,’ and in this sense is very close to modern social science.”¹⁸

Again, we have a little bit of truth mixed with a considerable amount of truth-stretching! God, and the Scripture, through which He spoke, does recognize the gods as the work of man’s hands. The Hebrews were warned that for disobedience to Jehovah, they would find themselves scattered among the other nations and serving other gods. “And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood

and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell” (Deut 4:28). The Bible is not accepting these gods who are the work of man’s hands, but is recognizing them for what they are, worthless. It is a statement of their origin, but not an acceptance of them as right. The gods are false and impotent, not seeing nor hearing, etc. In other words, they have no value or reality. The New Testament sees the construction of these gods, as not acceptable in any sense, but as a direct result of man’s wilful denial of the only true God, and man’s own sin (Rom 1: 18-23).

The secularists claim that they have no serious interest in persecuting religion, but simply mean to undercut it by their more relevant teaching. However, we notice that communism and Christianity are seen by these men as having identical rules for wiping out traditional religious thought.¹⁹ And finally, it becomes crystal clear just how the glorious Utopia of secularization is going to come about. And this makes the comparison of communism and Christianity, as made by the secularist, become very pertinent indeed! For the secularist says that the first requirement for the realization of the secularization of society is a **demand that all men be drawn into the secularization process** so that no one clings to dangerous precritical illusion that his values are ultimate.²⁰

NOTICE, CHRISTIANS! THIS IS CRITICAL!

In order for this new theological idea to reach its ultimate conclusion, it is necessary to force all people to join. It is necessary that all will conform and no one think that their moral or religious values are ultimate. NO BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY WILL BE PERMITTED. It would be good to note here that the references made to Harvey Cox’s book, *The Secular City*, are to the second edition where he says that he toned down some references to the end of religion!

The Theology of secularization permeates the leadership of the World Council of Churches. Is it any wonder then, that they so vehemently fight fundamentalism, a system that cannot exist side by

side with the secularist? Is it any wonder that in many countries they have tried again and again to have only their clergymen accepted into the armed forces? Is it any wonder that they have, using another tactic, tried so hard to get the soft-willed, middle-of-the-roaders to enter into dialogue with them?

The forces of secularization are aimed at a one world, one government, non-religious society where all must conform. And at the present time, their most active vehicle for the realization of this nightmare is the World Council of Churches and Communist backed revolutionary and terrorist forces which are still active in many third world countries, despite communism's collapse in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

“The Theology of secularization permeates the leadership of the World Council of Churches.”

Notes

¹Harvie M. Conn, *Contemporary Trends in Theology* (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.) pp. 46-47.

²Harvey Cox, *The Secular City*, Revised Edition (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1965) p. 232.

³C.A. vanPeursen, *Man and Reality, the History of Human Thought*, Student World, No. 1 (1963) p. 21.

⁴Edward P. Clowney, *The Doctrine of the Church* (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1969) p.5.

⁵M.M. Thomas, *Uppsala Report*, 1968, pp. 163-164.

⁶*Uppsala Report*, Section II, World Education and Social Development, p. 42.

⁷*Christianity Today*, June 8, 1979, p. 61.

⁸C.A. vanPeursen, as quoted by Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1965) p.1.

⁹Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: MacMillan Co.) pp. 1,2.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²Ibid, p. 3.

¹³Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁴Ibid, p. 19.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 22.

¹⁶Ibid, pp. 22-23.

¹⁷Ibid, p. 28.

¹⁸Ibid, p. 28.

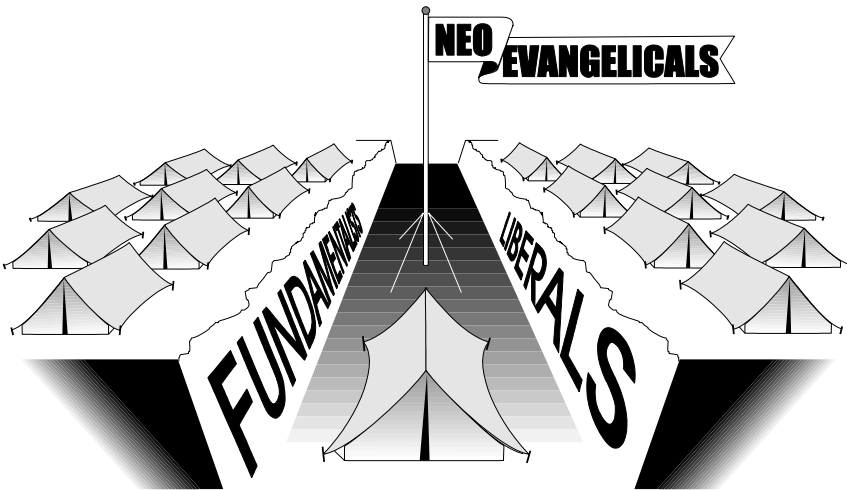
¹⁹Ibid, p. 21.

²⁰Ibid, p. 20.

CHAPTER TEN

NEO-EVANGELICALISM - PART I

The Movement



Introduction

We have seen in our chapter on the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy, that by the 1930's the lines were quite clearly drawn. One was either a Fundamentalist or a Modernist. One either believed the Word of God in its literal sense, or one did not. While it is true that many fine Christian men stayed in their Modernist-controlled denominations to try and turn them back to the truth, they all failed. No group turned back, and one by one, the churches and schools

founded by these men were taken over by the Liberals who controlled their denominations.

For those who grew up or ministered during the 1930's and 1940's, the distinction was very clear. One was either a lover of the Bible or a destroyer of the Church. It was a sad comparison and the separation was at great cost. The positions were clear and easy to understand. But they were not to remain that way for long, despite the lessons of Church history and the sorrow of that recent controversy.

Shortly after the Second World War, a new idea would arise among Fundamentalist schools that would sow confusion, heartbreak, and division among God's people. This idea would start many schools, churches, and missions on their downfall from a clear defense of the Faith against any form of compromise with Liberals. It would permeate the very schools, churches and missions founded by Fundamentalists in their earlier defense against the liberals who had gained control of the old seminaries and denominations. It is hard to believe that in so short a time believers could forget the danger of liberal thought and the insidious way it contaminates everything it touches. Perhaps the sad words of G.W. Dollar are really true: "While the fathers of Fundamentalism fought for their faith, their children do very little more than smile."¹

The Founding Of Neo-Evangelicalism

In 1948, during the graduation exercises of the Fuller Theological Seminary in California, Dr. Harold Ockenga introduced a new word to the theological world — Neo-Evangelicalism.² This was to be a movement which adhered to all the orthodox teachings of Fundamentalism, but would avoid certain weaknesses that Dr. Ockenga felt were too much a part of that position.

At first the pronouncement did not cause much of a stir. But very rapidly the movement became a focal point for the intellectuals and scholars among the Fundamentalists. As the movement grew, it

became more definitive concerning its outlook. The idea was, according to its followers, not only to enter fields neglected by Fundamentalists, but also to be more tolerant of others. This, it was believed, would foster more unity and give wider acceptance to the Gospel. Since even most of us in the Fundamentalist movement will admit that many of our number have, in their personality squabbles, often caused us to be our own worst enemies, statements like this were not very disturbing. However, it was not too long after the movement got under way that its strong negative response to fundamentalism, as well as the danger of its rapidly changing position, became clear.

The Neo-Evangelical Position Described

On December 8, 1957, Dr. Harold J. Ockenga issued an official press release entitled, *The New Evangelicalism*.³ In this release he described the movement, as he envisioned it some ten years after first introducing the more technical term, “Neo-Evangelicalism.” From this release and subsequent supporting statements of other Neo-Evangelicals, we can see the following position taking shape.

1. Neo-Evangelicalism is strongly Anti-Fundamentalist

In the above mentioned release, Dr. Ockenga stated that,

New Evangelicalism differs from Fundamentalism in that it is willing to handle the social problems which Fundamentalism evades...Fundamentalism has become impotent to change society....

The basic charge is that Fundamentalism has failed to change the world scene, win out over growing heresy, and change social situations, etc. The inference is then clear that the Neo-Evangelical is going to do these things!

We must ask ourselves a question. Since by Dr. Ockenga’s own words the loyalty of the Fundamentalist is based on proper doctrine and faithfulness to the Scripture and yet it has failed, on what will

Neo-Evangelicalism base its loyalties in order to win? What greater source of strength for victory can there be than a faithfulness to God's Word, which teaches salvation from sin in a personal physically-risen Christ and a life of service to him through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit?

Perhaps the reason the battle appears to have been lost is that some fail to see clearly the object of the Church's battle. There is no inference anywhere in the Holy Scripture that the Believer is going to "change society," or stop the onward trend of heresy or unbelief in the world. To the contrary, the Scripture says,

But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim 3:13).

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but, after their own lusts, shall heap to themselves teachers having itching ears (2 Tim 4:3).

The picture we see here is not of a Church victorious over the evils of society, or over the modernistic and liberal heretics within the Church.

Perhaps it is for this reason that our brothers in the Neo-Evangelical movement have also, after several decades, failed to change the theological and ecclesiastical scene, or solved, in any noticeable measure, the social problems. We thank God for every soul saved under the ministry of these men. But we weep for every soul confused by the non-scriptural inference that Neo-Evangelicalism can be orthodox, while at the same time fellowshipping with the liberals, and condemning the Fundamentalist position.

2. Neo-Evangelicalism is Ultra-Intellectual

The New Evangelical is willing to face the intellectual problems and meet them within the framework of modern learning...the Evangelical believes that Christianity is intellectually defensible, but the Christian cannot be an

obscurantist in scientific questions pertaining to creation, the age of man, the universality of the Flood and other moot biblical questions.⁴

The first inference we gather here is that the Fundamentalist is not well educated and therefore, unlike the Neo-Evangelical, cannot take an intellectual approach to life. Basically this is true. While there are certainly any number of well educated intellectuals in the Fundamentalist movement, most of us who are pastors and missionaries are neither highly educated nor intellectual. And many of us are constantly amazed that God would call us to His service in areas of responsibility as He has done. We would further fail to believe that such a thing could be of God were it not for our loyalty to the Word of God which says,

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh [by human standards], not many mighty [influential], not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence (1 Cor 1:26-29).

Despite the fact that many of us lack human qualifications for the work of the ministry we are reassured by the words of Paul,

But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor 1:30).

Let us notice a few points in the Neo-Evangelical's statement with regard to their intellectual approach.

a. "We believe that Christianity is intellectually defensible..."

Not being an intellectual, I must confess I am not too sure just what is meant by that statement. But I recall the words of the Scripture,

But without faith it is impossible to please Him (God).... (Heb 11:6).

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb 11:1).

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isa 55:8,9).

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.... (1 Cor 1:18).

These verses strongly indicate that, so far as the world system of knowledge is concerned, the Christian message is not defensible. In fact, without faith and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word, it is not only indefensible, but foolishness. For this very reason the world's greatest lovers of wisdom, the Greeks, found Paul's message unacceptable (Acts 17:22-32).

The Scripture is logical and meets the need of man because it is the message of man's Creator. God certainly knows man's need and longs to fill it. But it is met on the basis of faith. While human knowledge has developed to a point where many more areas of the Scripture are intellectually defensible, the world still lacks the knowledge necessary to meet God on an intellectual basis. No matter how educated and intellectual a man may be, many areas of the Scripture must either be accepted by faith, discarded as not true, or explained away. This is the inherent danger of the proud, intellectual approach to the message of the Almighty God, as we shall now see.

b. "A Christian cannot be an obscurantist in scientific questions pertaining to creation...the universality of the flood and other moot biblical questions."

The major danger of an intellectual approach to the Scripture is that man feels duty bound to make the Scripture match up with what

the intellectuals of the world have declared to be right. Almost from its very beginning, the Neo-Evangelical movement was in trouble with the historic Christian position of inerrancy and a literal interpretation of the Scripture.

“The major danger of an intellectual approach to the Scripture is that man feels duty bound to make the Scripture match up with what the intellectuals of the world have declared to be right.”

As early as 1960 there was trouble in the Neo-Evangelical ranks over its position on the Bible. Dr. Frank Gaebelin, who is sometimes classed among the Neo-Evangelicals, states:

We should rejoice at the renaissance of good enlightened scholarship among evangelicals which is sometimes called Neo-Evangelicalism. But at the same time we must not blink at the evidence that there is a strong current among some evangelicals, a subtle erosion of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Scripture that is highly illogical as well as dangerous.⁵

Some Results Of The Neo-Evangelicals’ Weakened Position on Scripture

Historically, men have always either believed in the inspiration of the Scripture and its inerrancy or rejected it. This is reasonable since, if God inspired the Scripture, then it is without error. If He did not inspire it, being then only the work of men, it contains errors. But there is a strong movement these days among many Neo-Evangelicals to divide these two facts. They claim to believe in the inspiration of the Scripture, but deny it is without error. Two leading Neo-Evangelicals were quoted in an American newspaper concerning their view on inerrancy and their words are shocking, to say the very least.

The Rev. Dr. Paul S. Reese was quoted in this article concerning the use of “cliches” by the church which he felt were not necessarily realistic. Among these “cliches” mentioned was the term “inerrancy.” Dr. Reese was quoted as saying,

We say this phrase refers only to the original manuscripts of the writers, but no such manuscripts are available today. So you can't apply this meaning to any existing part of the Bible.⁶

This is a very shocking statement to come from a Christian leader who has served as President of the National Association of Evangelicals and is considered a leading scholar by many Neo-Evangelicals.

Dr. Harold Bass, professor of Bethel Seminary in the same newspaper article made even stronger statements against the inerrancy of the Scripture.

Many of us admit that the Bible unquestionably contains factual errors...but we still maintain that it is inerrant in divine purpose. The secret is to try to understand the context of the language and the logic used in writing the Bible.⁷

Dr. Bass leaves us with the same dilemma as the liberal theologians who do not believe in inspiration. Who decides what is accurate and what is not? How does finite man determine what is "divine purpose" and what is not? Since obviously the intellectuals cannot agree on these issues, what does the average Christian do? The truth of the matter is clear. These men have allowed their concept of inspiration to drop to such a low degree that it is questionable if they any longer hold to inspiration, in the historical Christian sense.

Many of us who had been greatly blessed through the years by books written by Dr. Bernard Ramm were saddened to find in his book, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, that he holds such a low view of inspiration. We note that Dr. Ramm is one of the leading exponents of the Neo-Evangelical stand. *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* was printed by Moody Press which causes us to assume that they also have lowered their view on the inspiration of the Scripture. The book also contained the approval of Dr. E.J. Carnell and Dr. Wilbur M. Smith, both of whom are connected with Fuller Theological Seminary and Dr. Elving Anderson, Professor of

Zoology of Bethel College, all of whom are leaders in the Neo-Evangelical movement.

Dr. Ramm's view of inspiration

Dr. Ramm is outspoken in his support of the divine origin and inspiration of the Scripture and “emphatically rejects” theories of partial inspiration, as well as the liberal and Neo-Orthodox views of the Scripture.⁸ However, as we have earlier noted, inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy are no longer inseparable in the thinking of the Neo-Evangelicals. While Dr. Ramm claims to hold to the infallibility of the Scripture, his writings make it openly clear that he does not mean by this that the Bible is without error, at least in the literal sense.

“No limited view of inspiration—but a God limited in inspiration” While rejecting any idea of limited inspiration, the Neo-Evangelical does accept the idea of errors in the Bible because, in His revelation, God was limited by the tools He chose to use. Since God chose to use the Hebrew and Greek languages, He is limited by them. Since these languages, like all languages, are closely tied to the culture of the people who speak them, then God is also limited by culture.⁹ And since God chose men to write the Scripture, in areas of science, the revelations are limited by the “apparent,” that is, what could be seen by the human beings God inspired to write the Bible.¹⁰

As these Neo-Evangelical believers present their views of the Scripture, our hearts ache as we can almost feel them struggling between the idea of the literal truth of a fully inspired Word of God, completely free from all error, and an accommodation of some sort to allow them to hold to their human systems of science. We see this in Dr. Ramm's writings when he says:

The radical error of the modernist is to write off the supernatural character of the Bible by a destructive theory of accommodation. The radical error of the hyper-orthodox is his failure to see there is a measure of accommodation.¹¹

So the modernist went too far in accommodating the idea of revelation, but the hyper-orthodox (i.e. Fundamentalist) does not want to allow for any accommodation. In other words, the Fundamentalist view that God did not allow Himself to be limited, either by the languages He inspired men to write in, or by the culture in which these men lived, is non-intellectual in the extreme and keeps us from really understanding the Scripture as it should be understood.

So the Liberal is wrong about inspiration, in that his view is too low; the Fundamentalist is wrong in his view, in that it is too high. But the Neo-Evangelical's view of inspiration is in the middle, and it is just right! And if you would like to follow this view, we quote Dr. Ramm's explanation of it.

We propose the following general guide: (1) Whatever in the Scripture is in direct reference to natural things is *most likely* in terms of the prevailing cultural concepts; (2) whatever is directly theological or didactic is *most likely* trans-cultural; and (3) by clearly understanding the trans-cultural element in the Scripture, and by a clear understanding of the sociology of language (pragmatics), we can decipher what is trans-cultural under the mode of the culture.¹² (italics added)

If we believe Dr. Ramm's contention that a proper understanding of the Bible is the ability to balance properly the amount that language and culture binds or doesn't bind the Word of God, then we must also believe the old Roman Catholic position on the Holy Scripture. The Roman Catholic Church proclaimed for centuries that the common man should not read the Bible because it was too hard to understand and he might get the wrong idea. Therefore, Roman Catholics were actually forbidden to read the Scripture, but called upon to let the church make it clear to them. The position of the Neo-Evangelical intellectual is that without a clear understanding of both the languages and cultures of Bible times, plus strong training in philosophy, God's revelation cannot be clearly understood. As a matter of fact, even with such knowledge, we note that Dr. Ramm's

instructions for accommodating Bible revelation within its cultural context contains in two places the phrase “most likely.” Thus human reasoning must also play a strong part in deciding what portions of the Scripture are literally true and what are not.

This position, taken by these believers, leaves us with the same dilemma as the liberals. How is the finite mind of man, no matter how educated or intellectual, going to fathom out what is the inspired revelation of God and what is that revelation’s true meaning?

The Apostle Paul’s View On Inspiration

It should be encouraging to the average Christian to know that the Apostle Paul, one of the few intellectuals among the Apostles, showed by his teaching a total rejection of this type of intellectual approach to the Scripture. In Galatians 3:16, the Apostle Paul builds his entire argument that Christ was the promised seed of Abraham through which the world would be blessed, on the number of the noun. He noted that the promise was to Abraham’s “seed” not to Abraham’s “seeds.” This has upset scholars tremendously because the Hebrews often used “seed” (singular) to mean progeny (seeds, plural). The Apostle Paul was saying, in effect, we are dealing with the inspired Word of God and when God says seed is singular, it is exactly what He meant!

Where does the theory of God’s revelation limited by language and culture lead?

We will follow briefly Dr. Ramm’s tortuous path as he attempts to interpret the Scripture, both rejecting the Fundamentalists’ “literally true” position and the Liberals’ “myths containing truth” position. In part, we have already seen that this theory leads to the assumption that no matter what God sees, He is able to reveal, so far as natural things are concerned, only what the men He inspired can see.

The Flood

Dr. Bernard Ramm, with great assurance, announces that no matter what the Bible says, the flood was not world wide. But the Scripture clearly states,

And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered... and all flesh died that moved upon the earth ... all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground ... and Noah only remained alive and they that were with him in the ark (Gen 7:19-23).

Dr. Ramm argues long and hard against a universal flood simply because it does not match with the present day findings of science. In his mind, it is necessary for the Christian to make the Scripture agree with what science currently claims to be true. In his arguments against the flood, we find that while he may be an intellectual in the areas of theology, philosophy, and sociology, his knowledge of the tropics is certainly limited. We know he has never seen a real tropical rainy season, or he would never have made the following ridiculous statement in arguing against a worldwide flood.

The causes of the flood according to the Bible are rain and water from the fountains of the deep. This has generally been taken to mean rain from a steady downpour and the coming up of some other source of water from wells, springs or the ocean. Water from rain would hardly be sufficient to cause a flood of such proportions.¹³

First, we notice that in his zeal to prove the Bible agrees with science, he holds the position that the Bible does not really mean what it says. He ignores the problem of the fountains of the deep. This is plainly a supernatural opening of the earth and outpouring of vast quantities of water. Since no one has ever seen this happen, it is impossible to say that the entire earth could not be flooded this way.

Second, he makes the statement that the quantities of water that could come from a downpour of rain could never cause a flood of

such proportions. Obviously Dr. Ramm has little knowledge about even natural downpours! This simple Gospel preacher has often sat on the porch of his home in Palawan and after a downpour of less than two hours, seen the river in front of his home change from a trickling brook one could cross without getting his feet wet, to a roaring current impossible to cross, with currents strong enough to uproot gigantic trees. The people of Central Luzon might teach Dr. Ramm a little about the ability of a natural downpour to flood areas as large as some of the smaller American States in just a day or so. Yes, even without the fountains of the deep breaking open, the flooding of the world would not be hard for many people to understand.

Dr. Ramm makes fun of Dr. Harry Rimmer all through his book. Concerning the flood, he says his argument is not “internally coherent.” In fact, he goes to great lengths to destroy every argument for a literal interpretation of the biblical account of the flood. How sad that a believer must work so hard to prove his Bible is right, thinking that he must make it agree with what present day science says is true.

In his final condemnation and rejection of a world-wide flood, Dr. Ramm repeats a statement that has become a by-word for those believers whose love of “human wisdom” has lowered their view of inspiration: “...the question is not: ‘what can God do’? but, ‘what did God do’”? To which we must sadly, but truthfully add, for these Neo-Evangelicals, it is also the question of, not “what did God say,” but “what did God mean?” And with all their semantic shifting and protestation of a belief in a fully inspired Bible, they are little better off than the liberal when it comes to deciding what in the Bible is literally true and what is not.

Following Dr. Ramm’s reasoning is a torturous task. For instance, he denies that the sun stood still, despite the fact that the Bible says: “And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed...” (Joshua 10:13). It was, says Dr. Ramm, a miracle of refraction, or, through a supernaturally given image the sun and moon appeared to stand

still.¹⁴ Again, according to him, it is not that God could not do it, but the question is, ‘would God do it’?

Although denying that the sun stood still, Dr. Ramm does believe the account of Jonah and the whale.¹⁵ He also believes in the account of the star of Bethlehem:

...we take the language strictly... we believe that it was a special manifestation for the birth of Jesus and that it was seen only by the wise men.¹⁶

This tortuous path of the intellectual continues between literal acceptance and rejection. Coming to the Exodus, the “naturalistic theory” is used to explain away most of the miracles, although Dr. Ramm takes a more conservative view on some points than do many of his Neo-Evangelical colleagues. However, in his introduction to his book, *His Way Out*, he makes two very startling statements:

Wherever biblical critics seem to make a real case in which there is close universal, international agreement, *the evangelical has no other course than assent*. Biblical criticism is ‘wide open’ as a discipline compared to physics, but even so we should not always use this to be getting off the hook ... Exodus may have been inspired from heaven, but it was not dropped from heaven, and the human side of its production is the rightful territory of biblical criticism.¹⁷ (italics added)

Any time, therefore, that the believer finds biblical criticism has made a strong argument about any physical or scientific fact in the Scripture, the believer has no choice other than to deny the literal statements of the Scripture and accept the ideas of biblical criticism!

Conclusion

We see the pitfalls of this ultra-intellectual approach to the Scripture. The feeling that it is the duty of the Christian to bring about a reconciliation between science and the Scripture causes these men to ridicule their fellow believers who hold to a literal interpretation of the Bible. At the same time they bend over

backwards to find merit in the unscientific theories and discoveries of unbelievers.

Neo-Evangelicalism Is Dangerously Inclusive

From the very beginning of the Neo-Evangelical movement, there was a strong feeling that the Fundamentalists were too exclusive and that there was a need to be somehow involved with what they generally refer to as the “mainstream” of Church activity. In the words of Dr. Ockenga,

...the Neo-Evangelical has changed its strategy from one of separation to one of infiltration... Instead of attack upon error, the Neo-Evangelicals proclaim the great historic doctrines of Christianity.¹⁸

According to Dr. Ockenga, the results of this approach have been phenomenal. Now we are not sure just where these phenomenal results have been, but it is very obvious where they have not been, as we shall see upon an examination of the results of this type of ecumenical thinking.

1. “Strategy has been changed from one of separation to one of infiltration.”

One hesitates to use over and over again verses that have become a hallmark for separation and presented so many times before. But this we must note: It is biblical to be separated from apostasy and so it is the biblical position that the Neo-Evangelicals are leaving! (2 Cor 6:14-18).

According to any standard dictionary of American English, to infiltrate can be applied to people, groups, or factions in just one way: to gain control of an organization, or accomplish a task, secretly and/or by subterfuge. There is dishonesty involved in infiltration. One pretends to be something that they are not, in order to gain their objectives. Even if it were possible to conquer the liberal and ecumenical church movements in this way, it would be wrong. The

philosophy of the communist and the liberal theologian says “the end justifies the means,” but this is never true in biblical Christianity where we are faced with the absolutes of a holy and just God.

“There is dishonesty involved in infiltration.Even if it were possible to conquer the liberal and ecumenical church movements in this way, it would be wrong.”

Some of these infiltration tactics have emerged very clearly in recent years. The movement appears very clever, but one cannot really be sure who is infiltrating whom. As Church history will bear out, the Christian who stays or enters within liberal groups holding to heresy is always swallowed up by the very heresies they condone. It has never been otherwise and it never will be.

Infiltration is aided by flying false colors. The liberal theologian has been doing this for many years. By changing his terminology, the liberal can sound just like a conservative with no change in position. Evidently the Neo-Evangelical feels he can do the same type of thing. Says Mr. Mark Eastman, former editorial assistant of *Decision* magazine:

We are translating some of our beloved Christian terms into contemporary language. For example, the word ‘saved,’ is precious and close to us as Christians, but as you know from your own experience, it tunes out the non-Christian world faster than almost any of our other sacred terms.¹⁹

Along with the term “saved,” “repent,” and “be born again,” a number of others are to be disregarded, or rather, translated into contemporary language. The confusion this leads to will become clear as our study continues. But it should be noted here that these so-called “beloved Christian terms” are in fact not traditional, but biblical. They are used to point out the difference between biblical salvation and non-biblical religion; between God’s way of thinking and man’s. Since they are terms from the Word of the unchanging God of salvation, perhaps we should stand just a little in awe of the

power and intellect that gave those phrases to the world, and be a little slow in substituting our own.

2. “Instead of attack upon error, the Neo-Evangelicals will ‘Proclaim the great historic doctrines of Christianity.’”

If the great historic doctrines of Christianity could be spread successfully without attacking error, one wonders why the preachers of the Scripture did so much attacking of error. If the Apostle Paul had understood this concept of the Neo-Evangelical, he could have saved himself a lot of trouble, had a much bigger following, and avoided an awful lot of unnecessary writing!

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than ye have received, let him be accursed (Gal 1:8,9).

The Apostle Paul obviously rejected the Neo-Evangelical’s idea of not attacking error. The people to whom he was referring were not even denying that Jesus was the Christ. They were, however, confused about law and grace. One would have thought easier words could have been used. Or at least there was no need to “harp” on this problem by repeating it in such strong terms. But then, if the Bible is the inspired Word of God, we must not blame this lack of “know-how” on the Apostle but on the Author of the Word. Or we might just conclude that God does know what He is doing, and it is not the size of the church, but the purity of the church that makes it effective in reaching the lost in the true spiritual sense. The error, so definitely and soundly condemned here in Galatians, despite its seriousness, is not as bad as the errors expounded by today’s ecumenical church leaders. They deny everything in the Scripture so far as the historic Christian doctrines are concerned.

3. “The results of this approach have been phenomenal”

Something that is happening must be pleasing to the Neo-Evangelical for such words to be used. We must wonder what it is! But whatever the results are, it is not in the area of the purity of the Church. This is no longer important as the Neo-Evangelical “infiltrates” the ecumenical movement and makes partners of heretics and blasphemers. The results of which they speak could hardly be in gaining control of any ecumenical church as these are still dying, each year having fewer schools, churches, members, pastors and funds. In fact, so far as the Ecumenical church is concerned, they will agree with the Neo-Evangelical. They have had phenomenal success. This idea is spelled out by Martin E. Marty, Associate Dean of the University of Chicago School of Divinity, one of the few schools in America that have been, from its founding, ultra-liberal.

Modern life leaves local and personal groups little choice but to link up. Even the anti-ecumenical forces among the protestants that oppose the World and National councils of churches have banded together in a unity movement known as the National Association of Evangelicals. Although their motto has been, ‘Cooperation without compromise,’ they have actually compromised away many old divisive practices. Conservative Protestants in the Campus Crusade, the Full Gospel Businessmen’s International, and the Billy Graham Crusades have cooperated extensively on an ecumenical basis. Instead of being present at the end of the age of ecumenism, we may be witnessing only the altering of terms and bases.²⁰

We note this ecumenical professor from an ultra-liberal seminary connects the activities of compromise and cooperation of the Neo-Evangelicals as part of a movement that will help revitalize the ecumenical program by an altering of terms and bases. Perhaps now we can begin to get a glimpse into the danger of cooperation with enemies of the historic Christian faith. Here, too, we see the danger of the attempt to infiltrate their ranks by the changing of God-inspired terms to make the Gospel more acceptable to modern man.

Is Professor Marty mistaken in his observation? From an intellectual viewpoint, which thing the Neo-Evangelicals crave, he is most qualified to judge! For a number of years he has written a summary of Christian and religious activities around the world for the giant Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, who use his summaries in their famous *Year Book for the World Book Encyclopedia*. He is a noted author and historian of religion whose work won the National Book Award in 1972.

We might ask ourselves why this liberal ecumenist should see the Neo-Evangelicals as compromisers who are helping the Ecumenical movement move forward on a new base and under new terms. To get a clear answer to this question, we must look at another aspect of Neo-Evangelicalism.

The “New Evangelical”

In our study we have considered the Neo-Evangelical movement as having brought about a new doctrinal position. This position is based on principles that are anti-fundamentalist, ultra-intellectual and dangerously inclusive. Although the men who started the movement said they were not leaving the fundamentals of the faith, we have clearly seen that many of them have done so. In an effort to deny any connection with Fundamentalism and reach out to the liberal churchmen, the Neo-Evangelicals have, in many instances, altered their view of the inspiration of the Scripture. This new position is somewhere in the “nether world” — between the Fundamentalist’s literal interpretation of the Scripture and the liberal’s “myths are true” interpretation. Their position allows them to strongly proclaim a belief in the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, while also claiming to find error in areas of science and history. While some Neo-Evangelicals have fought this rapidly growing erosion of the doctrine of divine inspiration, it has been a losing battle.

It is not just in the area of the inspiration of the Scripture that the Neo-Evangelicals have shifted their doctrinal position but also in the area of inclusiveness. They have shifted from “dialogue without

compromise” to “cooperation without offending.” The latter statement can be more clearly defined as “compromising a little.”

Nowhere has the doctrinal position of the Neo-Evangelical more openly affected the Church than in the area of evangelism. While the term “Neo-Evangelical” has been used interchangeably with “New Evangelical,” there are many people calling themselves New Evangelicals who have no clear concept of the Neo-Evangelical doctrinal position. Many who have become involved in this think that to be a New Evangelical just means to use every modern means to win people to Christ with a broader base of fellowship among believers in this work. They feel they are still Fundamental in doctrine, just more forward-looking in their evangelistic effort.

The truth of the matter is, however, that the Neo-Evangelical doctrinal position has spawned the New Evangelical evangelistic method. One cannot, in any honesty, be a Fundamentalist and also be involved in this New Evangelicalism which has sprung from the very weak and compromising doctrinal position of the Neo-Evangelical. People do not understand this because the “semantic” tricks used by the liberals have now been entered into by the Neo-Evangelicals. Rejecting biblical terminology, the Neo-Evangelical uses terms which appear doctrinally sound, but actually have meanings which change according to the theology of the hearer. In order to see the danger involved in this new trend in “mass evangelism,” we will look more closely at this scene.

Notes

¹George W. Dolla, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1973) p. 201.

²Harvie Conn, *Contemporary Trends in Theology* (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1959) p. 125.

³George W. Dolla, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1973) p. 204.

⁴Dr. Harold J. Ockenga, press release, Dec. 6, 1957, as quoted by Dr. Arthur E. Steele, Class notes, Ecumenism 106; Clearwater Christian College (1974) p. 36.

⁵Dr. Frank Gaebelein, *Christianity Today*, May 9, 1960, p. 647, as quoted by Dr. Archer Weniger, "The Neo-Evangelicals and Inerrancy of the Bible," *The Sword of the Lord* (3/18/66)

⁶Jim Huffman, *Minneapolis Tribune* (1/22/66) "*Conservative View of Theology is Changing*" as quoted by Dr. G. Archer Weniger, *The Sword of the Lord* (3/18/66).

⁷Ibid.

⁸Bernard Ramm, *A Christian's View of Science and the Scripture* (London: The Paternoster Press, 1955) pp. 45, 45.

⁹Ibid, p. 49.

¹⁰Ibid, pp. 45, 46.

¹¹Ibid, p. 49.

¹²Ibid, p. 53.

¹³Ibid, p. 159.

¹⁴Ibid, p. 108.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 208.

¹⁶Ibid, p. 114.

¹⁷Bernard L. Ramm, *His Way Out* (Glendale, Calif.: Gospel Light Publications, 1974) p. 12.

¹⁸Dr. Harold J. Ockenga, press release, Dec. 6, 1957, as quoted by Dr. Arthur E. Steele, Class Notes, Ecumenism 106, Clearwater Christian College (1974) p. 37.

¹⁹Mark Eastman, *Decision Magazine* (Oct., 1969) p. 3.

²⁰Martin E. Marty, *World Book Year Book*, 1973 "Ecumenism in the '70's" (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1972) p. 178.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

NEO-EVANGELICALISM - PART II

The Method



Fundamentalist Beginning

The father of Neo-Evangelicalism, the doctrinal position, is Dr. Harold Ockenga. The father of New Evangelicalism, the evangelistic method, is Dr. Billy Graham. When Dr. Graham began preaching, his campaigns were supported by Fundamental churches. But he was soon to change his position in regard to fellowship in the work of the Lord.

The New York Crusade - The Turning Point

The great turning point for Dr. Graham came in 1957 when a huge evangelistic campaign was held in New York City's Madison Square Garden. He had been invited by the Fundamentalist churches. However, Dr. Graham declined the invitation unless the liberal churches in the Protestant Council of New York were included. With this requirement, many Fundamentalists, including Dr. Jack Wyrzten of Word of Life, separated from the campaign. Such Neo-Evangelicals as E.J. Carnell viciously attacked the Fundamentalists for their separatist position. Pastors who felt they could not work in cooperation with the liberal churches split over the issue.

The Dangerous Accommodations

Regardless of what anyone says, it is impossible to work with liberal churches and have their acceptance without a certain amount of accommodation. Only the Lord can look on a man's heart, so we have no way of knowing the present beliefs of Dr. Graham over the whole range of Christian doctrine. But it is evident that, like all believers who cooperate with unbelievers in church work, Dr. Graham has had to make a tremendous amount of *accommodation in the presentation of his message and the expression of his faith*. No matter what he actually believes, the impression given, especially to the unsaved, is that there is little difference between himself and some of the leading heretics on the Christian scene.

Accommodation Concerning Scripture

We have seen from our study of liberal theology that the attack always begins with the Scripture. With sadness we observed now those Christian brothers who have tried to walk the middle-of-the-road Neo-Evangelical position, almost immediately had difficulties in the area of inspiration. Today many of them hold a very low view of inspiration, a view so filled with human reason as to render the Scripture confusing and doubtful in many areas.

Dr. Graham also has had to make certain accommodations concerning the position of the Scripture in order to take the middle-of-the-road stance of the Neo-Evangelical. All Fundamentalists believe in the verbal inspiration and literal accuracy of the Scripture in every area in which it speaks. They demand that all with whom they fellowship hold this same view, which is the view of the historic Christian faith. Dr. Graham, having left the Fundamentalist position for that of the New Evangelicals, has this to say about the Holy Scripture:

I do not believe the ground of our fellowship is to be the inerrancy of the Scripture, but rather the ground of fellowship is to be the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I myself hold to the verbal inspiration viewpoint; I think any other position is fraught with danger.¹

We notice Dr. Graham sees any other position than that of a verbally inspired, inerrant Scripture as “fraught with danger.” Yet, as a leading evangelist and under-shepherd of the flock, he willingly fellowships with men who hold this dangerous position. And, as we shall see, with no warning of danger, he willingly allows men and women he has won to the Lord to sit under the teaching and influence of these men who hold such a dangerous position. This, I am afraid, is not just accommodation, but outright compromise of Christian principles and responsibilities on the part of a servant of God.

Accommodation Concerning Christian Fellowship

The first part of Dr. Graham’s statement, as just quoted, gives a basis for fellowship. It will not be based on the Scripture, but the “deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Now that statement has a thrilling sound and certainly our salvation is based on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is supreme, central and the Giver of eternal life. But outside of the Scripture, what can we know of Jesus Christ our Lord? In a theological world where semantic shifting and double talk demands that we consider not what the liberal says, but what he means, how

do we define Christ Jesus the Lord? The major problem that New Evangelicalism has brought to us is the fact that we are robbed of the ability to define our terms, if the fellowship is not based on God's revelation to His people through the Scripture. The sad truth is that many believers are so poorly informed that they do not even realize that terms must be defined. Because of a lack of understanding at this point, both new and old believers have been led into the lairs of wolves. But the evangelist will not point out danger. To the contrary, in order to avoid offending the liberal theologian, he seems to do everything to disguise the danger.

Note: When we believe in a verbally inspired, inerrant Scripture, we have a solid basis for fellowship. We can know who the Lord is, who God the Father is, who the Holy Spirit is, what salvation is and how it is

“... both new and old believers have been led into the lairs of wolves because the evangelist will not point out danger.”

obtained. We also have clear instruction concerning Christian ethics, that is, how we should live from day to day in a sinful world. When we deny Scripture its rightful place, we have no way to define what we mean by what we say and thus confusion sets in.

What Does it Mean to “Fellowship Around the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ?”

If Christian fellowship is based on what the Scripture says, there is no problem. If it is not based on the Scripture, we are in serious danger. We then have no criterion for defining the terms we use, or what we mean by the deity of Christ. We have a perfect example of this in Bishop John A.T. Robinson, a heretic who denies the very existence of the God of historic Christianity. In closing his book, *But That I Can't Believe*, Robinson says:

Christ remains for the Christian absolutely central. ‘Jesus is Lord’; that is the earliest Christian creed and the distinctive

feature of the Christian Gospel. And I have no desire whatsoever to change or dilute it.²

Accepting Robinson's statement from a Fundamentalist view, it sounds orthodox in the extreme. But from our previous study of his theology, we have seen that the meaning he attributes to these terms is very different from that of historic Christianity. First, Robinson believes Jesus Christ was merely a man through whom God's love was most clearly shown. Secondly, we have seen that Robinson does not really believe in God at all! God, for him, is "whatever is central to the human life." Therefore, Robinson could easily call Christ divine or deity and it would not mean anything at all, so far as the scriptural truth is concerned.

Another illustration of the danger of fellowshiping around the deity of Christ, when this term is not based on a biblical definition, is seen in the teaching of the Rev. William Barclay, a British churchman, often associated with Dr. Graham's evangelism. He says that Jesus Christ is divine, but denies the virgin birth. We must wonder, if there was no virgin birth, how Jesus could be the Son of God. We find the answer to this dilemma in the fact that Barclay does not use the theological terms such as "divinity" as defined by the Scripture. Following Dr. Graham's idea concerning the basis of fellowship allows Barclay to call Christ divine, although he does not believe that He is God.

This same trend that we have seen in the theology of the liberal and the Neo-Evangelical, we will now see in the ministry of Dr. Graham. Once the position of the Scripture is weakened, With regard to its inspiration or its authority, the Christian's position also weakens, in its effectiveness and obedience.

Accommodation of Expression

To my knowledge, Dr. Graham himself has not changed his beliefs in the area of any major Christian doctrine. But like all New

Evangelicals, he follows the semantic switching of the liberals in order to “make the message more acceptable.”

Very rarely any more does one hear Dr. Graham or the other evangelists of the New Evangelicals use the terminology of Scripture to express God’s plan of salvation. The use of terms such as “you must be born again” are ridiculed by the men in this movement as “old fashioned” and “hard to understand.” We must remind ourselves, however, that the term “you must be born again” was never easy to understand. In fact, it was not meant to be so! The Lord used this term in addressing a teacher of theology named Nicodemus. It was not an explanatory phrase, but a thought provoking one. The Lord was beginning to teach this man that human activity could never bring spiritual life. Only a new birth could do this. As we have previously mentioned, the terminology that the New Evangelical rejects as “old fashioned church tradition” is in reality not church tradition, but biblical expression which points out the difference between God’s way and man’s way.

In a number of recent telecasts, we heard Dr. Graham’s invitation to “come forward and commit yourself to Christ and allow Him to fill your heart with love.” By the hundreds people went forward to do this very thing. But what does “commit yourself to Christ” mean, especially among a group of men who fellowship around the “deity” of Christ rather than the inerrant Scripture?

To men like Robinson, Pike and Barclay, at least two of which appeared with Dr. Graham as he preached, these words mean little more than to give yourself to life’s deepest reality. This reality is generally “love”, whatever one wishes that to mean. And so, while some come forward to “commit themselves to Christ” and are honestly “born again” because they are dealt with by a true believer and get into a Bible-believing church, vast hoards of these people, channelled by Dr. Graham’s policy into modernistic or Roman Catholic Churches, never learn the truth.

In October of 1957, Dr. Graham spoke at the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. His address was reported by the infamous “God is dead” theologian, William Hamilton, in a front page article in the school bulletin.

He [Graham] made two points that stayed with us: the central need for a personal experience of Jesus Christ [or, he added, what Neibuhr would call an encounter with the living God]. A nice touch, and an impressive example of his extraordinary sensitiveness to an audience, and the other, necessity of personal discipline and prayer. Two days later, we heard and experienced the same two-fold truth from Dr. Ferre ...

This was an impressive lesson. First a man identified with American Fundamentalism came, and we listened. Then a distinguished theologian, long identified with the attack against both Fundamentalism and liberalism came and spoke. And what they said, or what they meant at least, was the same single thing...³

No doubt Dr. Graham was shocked to find that his message and the message of Dr. Ferre were seen as identical. Dr. Ferre is a man who wrote a book alleging that Jesus Christ, our Lord, was probably an illegitimate child, fathered by a Roman soldier! But Dr. Graham has no one but himself to blame. In order to “infiltrate” a liberal divinity school like Colgate-Rochester, Dr. Graham had to accommodate his terminology. In so doing, he allowed these liberal professors and students to interpret his message in whatever way the various terms used applied to their own system of thinking. If Dr. Graham had preached salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Creator of heaven and earth, he would never have been invited back; but he also would not have been misunderstood. If Dr. Graham had quoted the Apostle Paul and used Bible terminology, instead of using the terminology of Reinhold Niebuhr, the former dean of Union Seminary, a denier of the deity of Christ and the need for personal salvation, he would not have been thought of as being “sensitive to his audience.” But again, neither

would his message have been confused and equated with that of a non-believing liberal theologian.

Accommodation in Fellowship

Not only does the rephrasing of the Scripture's message into more acceptable terms cause confusion in the minds of people, but the recommendation of liberals by association also adds to the confusion. Since the base of New Evangelical fellowship is no longer inerrancy and inspiration of the Scripture but Jesus Christ, an amazing array of liberals, modernists, and heretics have graced the platforms of Dr. Graham's meetings. The extreme danger of this is very easy to see.

Everywhere Fundamentalists are castigated for not backing Dr. Graham and other mass evangelistic efforts. But the Scripture clearly asks the question,

... for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness
and what communion hath light with darkness? (2 Cor 6:14).

In the Los Angeles Crusade of 1963, Dr. Graham introduced from his platform, Dr. E. Stanley Jones with the words, "I now introduce my good friend, and trusted advisor, Dr. E. Stanley Jones."

Some of Dr. Jones' theological views are a complete denial of the verbal infallibility of the Scripture as stated in his book, *Christ at the Round Table*. In another of his books, *A Song of Accents*, he clearly denies that the New Testament is a revelation from God. And he makes an unbelievable statement on communism in his book, *The Choice Before Us*.

The fact is, as someone has said, Communism is the only political theory that really holds the Christian position of the absolute equality of every individual.⁴

Bishop James A. Pike of the Anglican Church, a heretic who ridiculed every basic truth of the historic Christian faith, was called upon to pray at one Graham crusade and appeared with him on a number of other occasions. This man was such a heretic, and in his

later life so deeply involved in spiritism, that even his own ultra-liberal church was often embarrassed by his actions and radical statements.

Believers, Note!

It would be good for God's people to clearly notice here that we are not pointing out men who have some "small doctrinal difference on moot points," but men who are unbelieving heretics. We are not criticizing Dr. Graham because he happens to be friends with these men, but because he joins with them in evangelistic efforts and holds them up as his advisors and men to be trusted and heeded in spiritual matters!

Not only Dr. Graham, but others of the ministers who work with him have taken this same confusing position regarding unbelieving heretics. Keith Miller, a main speaker at Dr. Graham's Minneapolis Congress on Evangelism, follows in Dr. Graham's footsteps in praising heretics. He wrote in his column in *Faith-At-Work* magazine,

Several years ago I was surprised to read about one of my Christian heroes, the priest-scientist Pierre Tielhard, that although he was a real optimist, he was evidently often lonely in his personal life...⁵

This Catholic theologian, called a "Christian hero" by Keith Miller, was such a heretic that even the Roman Catholic Church refused to allow the printing of his material. He was an evolutionist and denier of the Faith.

Rev. William Barclay, a professor of Divinity and biblical criticism in Glasgow University, is one of the latest liberals to be welcomed to the New Evangelical scene by Dr. Graham. In the Belfast Crusade in Ireland, Dr. Barclay's book, *Daily Bible Reading: The Gospel of John*, was given to every convert. In this book, Barclay states that while Jesus was divine, he was not God.⁶ He evidently follows the position of Harry Emerson Fosdick and other

liberals in making a difference between Jesus being divine and His being deity. The position of these men is living proof that without an inerrant authoritative Scripture, no one's position can be clearly understood because there is no standard of judgement. In this same book that was given to new converts, Barclay denies the miracle of Christ walking on the water⁷ and also explains away the miracle of the feeding of 5000.⁸

One must wonder what happened to Dr. Graham's statement about fellowshipping around the deity of Christ. None of the aforementioned men believe in His deity, and they are not only fellowshipping, but advising, leading and guiding in this ecumenical evangelistic effort. Perhaps it is time for many of the supporters of Dr. Graham, especially those saved under his earlier ministry, to re-examine his position. All must realize that no matter how gifted, sincere, or zealous a believer may be, the first step into compromise is the biggest, and those which follow lead further and further away from that which is right.

Accommodation of Responsibility

Ministers of the Gospel, as elders in the Church, have a responsibility to guard the flock. This awesome responsibility is mentioned often in the New Testament. While Dr. Graham's ministry as an evangelist is beyond that of the local church, the responsibilities of a pastor are still his to discharge. According to the Holy Scripture, such men are to:

- Guard the flock, Acts 2:28
- Teach the flock, 1 Pet 5:2
- Be an example to the flock, 1 Pet 5:3

It is not possible for these pastoral duties to be properly

“... no matter how gifted, sincere, or zealous a believer may be, the first step into compromise is the biggest, and those which follow lead further and further away from that which is right.”

discharged when unbelieving heretics are held up to new converts as reliable guides.

Can a 30-minute message, no matter how dynamic, offset a book which provides hours of teaching on doctrines contrary to Scripture? Should a minister of the Gospel travel among liberal modernistic men who ridicule the historic Christian faith, and refer to them as trusted friends and advisors? We must say that this type of action does not follow the Scriptural admonition for ministers to protect the flock, but to the contrary leads it into confusion and danger.

One final point concerning this area of responsibility to shepherd the flock. Dr. Graham, back in his more conservative days of 1953 wrote a book entitled *Peace with God*. It is a very fine book in most respects and written before New Evangelical influence caused him to drop much of the terminology of the Scripture in presenting the Gospel. The book is written, obviously, for new believers or the unsaved. And the phrase, “now that you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour” occurs quite regularly, followed by advice to new Christians. The book presents the basic doctrines of the historic Christian Church very clearly.

In this book there is one thirteen-page chapter entitled, “The Christian and the Church” which shows the early touch of accommodation which by now has come to so deeply affect Dr. Graham’s ministry. He calls choosing a church one of the most important decisions a Christian has to make, yet despite the rampant apostasy in so many church groups, Dr. Graham never once even hinted at this danger. Note the following advice, or lack of it, to new converts:

“All churches are just about the same”

Study the underlying belief of the various denominations and you will find that basically and historically they are almost identical... they all recognize Jesus Christ as God Incarnate, who died upon the cross and rose again that man might have salvation⁹

Now anyone at all familiar with the church scene knows that this statement simply is not true. Few, if any of the large denominations any longer require their ministers to adhere to these beliefs. In the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, and Methodist churches, there are men who openly deny these truths and are never admonished by the leadership of these denominations. What these churches believed historically is of no importance to the new believer, if these same churches do not believe these things today.

“If you are already in a church, there is no need to consider leaving”

Today, if you are among the forty-one percent of the population of this country [America] who have no formal church affiliation, you may stand in bewilderment before the number whose membership is open to you.¹⁰

But a large portion of the new converts, according to Dr. Graham himself, are already members of denominational churches. In fact, one of his excuses for ecumenical evangelism is to reach the lost in the denominational churches. As we can see from the above quote, this entire chapter, one of the most important decisions in a new believer’s life, simply assumes that the new convert, if he is a church member, will stay where he is. That quote is the only portion in the whole chapter on “The Christian and the Church” that mentions the problem of new converts that are already church members. Nowhere is there even a hint that the new convert should see if his church preaches the truth according to the Scripture.

“Christians should give to their church”

The entire world could be evangelized overnight if Christian people would give as the Lord has prospered them. Be a generous giver, and God has promised that He will return it to you a hundred-fold.¹¹

But suppose the giver has chosen to join the church of the disciples of Harry Emerson Fosdick who did not think the world needed to be evangelized? Or suppose their church home is made in a World Council of Churches affiliate where a “moratorium on

missions” has just recently been pronounced, and evangelization is equated with revolution? Then the new convert’s generous giving would go to foster political revolution rather than spiritual salvation. But again, no warning is given that a new convert should join a church where his mission money would go to saving souls through preaching the Bible message of faith in Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

If we honestly face the facts before us, we can see then that the position of Dr. Graham in recent years is fraught with danger. By his own admission, many of the people he associates with hold a dangerous view of inspiration. By his own actions, he intimates that heretics who deny the virgin birth and vicarious atonement are fine upstanding Christian men. By those same actions, and deliberate omissions in teaching, new converts are sent, by the thousands, into churches that do not teach the truth.

As we had seen by our short glimpse at American Church history, true biblical evangelism builds new churches and fills old ones. But again, in the year 1975, church membership in America was down and in other countries where this type of evangelism is being practiced, little permanent effect is perceived so far as church growth is concerned.

The New Evangelical idea of compromise to get greater results has no factual basis to recommend it. In this respect, the end has not justified the means, but simply proven the means to be unbiblical, so the end is the same.

Other Mass Evangelism Movements

Were ecumenical evangelism limited to Dr. Graham and his group it would be dangerous enough. But today a number of other groups, including some formerly Fundamental mission boards, have begun this same type of union with World Council Churches in the “interest” of a broader evangelistic outreach. The attitude of these

groups toward believers who will not cooperate with apostate church groups is the same as that of the group supporting Dr. Graham. Any hint of biblical separation brings cries of divisiveness and accusations of a lack of “Christian love.” It is sad, but true, that these terms the liberals have been hurling at separatist believers for years, are now being used by believers to justify their own unbiblical actions.

Crowds and numbers have become a mark of success in ecumenical evangelism. The more churches that cooperate the better, no matter what their doctrinal stand may be. And, as always, the converts are channelled back into the cooperating churches, no matter what their doctrinal stand may be!

The same semantic game is played by these groups as by liberals and other New Evangelicals. Bible terminology is never used, except when explaining the program to fundamental churches. “We are not cooperating with ecumenical churches, but just ‘mobilizing’ them,” is the explanation given to Fundamentalists who complain about Roman Catholic priests, nuns and liberal church groups being a part of the evangelistic effort.

But the same danger is found there because the same philosophy motivates the method. Reach great numbers, report huge percentages of decisions, and remain strangely quiet about what happens to the large majority of the “converts” when the campaigns are over. One of my sons, in his study of George W. Dollar’s book, underlined a statement that seems to sum up ecumenical evangelism extremely well:

Today’s New-Evangelical ‘souls at any cost’ philosophy has brought enfeebling alliance to the Church through ecumenical or compromise evangelism. These alliances, the product of spiritually adulterous unions, have so entangled Bible Christianity with those who preach another gospel that the clear line of separation between belief and unbelief, truth and error, righteousness and unrighteousness, has been all but erased.¹²

Ecumenical Evangelism Affects The Schools

Throughout Church History, heresy has begun with an attack on the Word of God. This attack has always taken place in the schools. The Neo-Evangelicals and their New Evangelism have weakened the position of the Scripture as the final authority of faith and life. Some of these have gone so far as to also weaken it in the area of inspiration. These attacks on the Scripture have taken place first in the schools. We are now slowly beginning to see the effect of these things in our churches.

Just recently I was shocked at an article written by an associate professor of one of America's best known Christian colleges, a school founded by Fundamentalists and which until a short time ago, was strongly separatist. This article offered a program for the church from 1976 through the year 2000. There are some good points in the article. The man is obviously a believer who holds to the need for the work of the Holy Spirit in making any church program of value. But this makes the message all the more dangerous as woven within it is a plan for compromise and fellowship that will show "the universality of the Church" to the world. And we searched in vain throughout this 24-year church program for any hint that the Lord's return might take place before its completion.

Neo-Evangelicalism Confusion Concerning The Universal Church

The article referred to is found in the *Eternity* magazine and entitled "Agenda for the Church: 1976-2000." It is written by Robert Webber. There are many points for concern in this article, such as his suggestion that the Reformation went too far in destroying church symbolism and we need to bring back "signs and symbols which point to God in our minds."¹³ We are most deeply concerned with the strong Neo-Evangelical doctrine of inclusivism which pervades the whole section on Church unity.

The writer strongly commends the groups involved in ecumenical evangelism and roundly condemns those groups which are separatist.

Today the evangelical church is a strange mixture of unity and divisiveness. An unusual unity between the denominations is experienced in the interdenominational organizations such as Inter-Varsity, Youth for Christ, and Campus Crusade, as well as interdenominational colleges, seminaries, publishing houses, and mission boards. The health of these organizations is that they recognize the mystical body of Christ to be more important than particular sociological expressions of the body. On the other hand some evangelicals are characterized by an extreme separatism that refuses fellowship with Christians who don't agree with them on every fine point of theology or even methods of evangelism and mission.¹⁴

We see in this statement the infiltration idea of the Neo-Evangelical doctrine. The inclusive groups recognize the Universal Church, the divisive groups (Fundamentalist) do not. The writer goes on to say that churches separated from the historic Christian denominations must think of their separation as a temporary thing. He claims they were called out only temporarily to draw attention to the truth. We must hold dialogue, not only with other separated groups, but also with those from which we have separated.¹⁵

According to Dr. Webber, there is a need to down-play our disagreements and recognize the need to return to the sense of oneness of the Christian Church. What he meant by this becomes quite clear by the following statement.

Many of us are still somewhat ingrown in the sense that we have a hard time recognizing the historic protestant churches as well as Roman and Greek Churches as part of the body of Christ. But I foresee a coming together of the church by the end of this century not so much in organizational unity but in spirit.¹⁶

Yes, I would totally agree with Mr. Webber. Many of us do have trouble seeing the so-called historic Christian denominations, the

Roman Catholic, and Greek Orthodox groups as part of the Church. To be part of the Church is to know Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and through that faith to have been baptized by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, which is the true Church. The fact that a few believers are spread out thinly here and there within these groups does not make these organizations part of the Universal Church. To consider them such is the utmost folly and a position of extreme danger. Should the Lord tarry past the year 2000, I pray earnestly that Mr. Webber's dream of a unity between Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, World Council of Churches' members and evangelical churches, will never come about. But his plan for this reminds us, with chilling clarity, of Revelation's "One World Church!"

In conclusion, Mr. Webber says that the separatist churches have lost the sense of the Universal Church. But we can see that Mr. Webber and his Neo-Evangelical brethren have lost the biblical description of the Universal Church, and this leads to the typical Neo-Evangelical confusion with which his article is filled.

Should the Lord tarry past the year 2000, the sons and daughters of the theological position of Neo-Evangelicalism, such as Mr. Webber preaches, will have no faith to defend and no spiritual position to hold.

A Summary Of The Neo-Evangelical Doctrine And The New Evangelical Methods

The Men

Unlike the other forms of theology we have examined, Neo-Evangelicalism was started by men who knew the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. But their emphasis on a human intellectual approach to the Scripture, and a lack of awareness of the danger of accommodation with apostate churches is rapidly leading the group away from the solid biblical basis which they once held.

The Problem

Almost from the beginning, their attempt to hold sound doctrine while fellowshiping closely with a theological and social world of disbelief and turmoil led the Neo-Evangelical movement into disagreement and trouble. Their willingness to hold dialogue with liberal and dialectic theologians has caused them to become critical of their Fundamentalist brethren while becoming closely entangled with the World Council of Churches and its heresy.

But the most serious problem brought about by this movement is in the area of the inerrancy and authority of the Scripture. It has been from this problem that all other problems have sprung. Slowly we see the Neo-Evangelical widening the gap between inerrancy and inspiration with many of them seeing these as separate and unrelated. These men, among which must be numbered Bernard Ramm and E.J. Carnell, have claimed that evangelicals can make minor “mental adjustments” and be able to retain inspiration, without inerrancy, and thereby rejoin the mainline Protestant-Ecumenical theology.¹⁷

The Ultimate Danger

The movement, in its willingness to once again open debate on the subject of the inerrancy and inspiration of the Scripture, is dabbling in the same area that began the modern liberal heresies. It was against these very heresies that Fundamentalism rose to defend the Church. The willingness of the Neo-Evangelical, first to hold dialogue, and now to work as equal partners with liberals and heretics in the mainline churches, show the direction in which they are rapidly moving. Despite all denials to the contrary, the push toward a social concern, which they condemn the Fundamentalist for not having, is rapidly leading them into the old “social gospel” of a generation ago. And if the Lord tarries a few more years, we will see the sons and daughters of the Neo-Evangelical movement with nothing more than a social gospel based on human intellect, to preach to a lost and dying world.

Recent Developments On The Neo-Evangelical Scene

Since the writing of the first edition of *Will Our Sons Defend the Faith*, many developments have taken place in the Neo-Evangelical movement which prove its great danger. Compromise not only with protestant liberals but now with the Roman Catholic Church is taking place regularly. But perhaps the biggest problem is that the Neo-Evangelical view of inspiration has quickly deteriorated until large numbers of men and schools associated with the movement no longer believe in a totally inerrant Scripture. As we have already seen, the Neo-Evangelicals from as early as 1960 had trouble concerning the position of the Holy Scripture, with men like Dr. Bernard Ramm and Dr. Paul Reese changing their view of the Scripture. By the late 1970's and early 1980's the situation had become far worse as the Neo-Evangelicals, refusing to speak out against error, allowed men with heretical views concerning the Scripture to be part of their movement and to teach in their midst.

This accommodation in the Neo-Evangelical view of the Scripture has resulted in what has popularly been called the Inerrancy Debate.

The institution around which the Inerrancy Debate has swirled in recent years is Fuller Theological Seminary. This seminary which was the birthplace of Neo-Evangelicalism has changed its doctrinal position to accommodate the many men on its staff, including Dr. Hubbard its president, who believe the Holy Scripture contains errors. It is from this prestigious Neo-Evangelical center of learning that we see the results of making minor "mental adjustments" about the Scripture.

We should note here that when Fuller Seminary was founded in 1947, the doctrinal statement committed the institution to an infallible Scripture. However, Fuller soon found it had men on its faculty that did not hold to this position. So, rather than lose these prestigious scholars, they changed their doctrinal position.

The original doctrinal statement of the seminary read: "The books which form the canon of the Old and New Testaments as

originally given are plenary inspired and free from all error in the whole and in the part. These books constitute the written Word of God, ‘the only infallible rule of faith and practice.’¹⁸

Their new statement reads: “Scripture is an essential part and trustworthy record of this divine disclosure. All the Books of the Old and New Testaments, given by divine inspiration, are the written Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.”¹⁹

At first glance, we seem to have just a re-wording of the original statement. But actually, we have a perfect example of the manner in which men who do not hold to inerrancy in the orthodox sense, work to cover up their departure from the truth. We notice that infallibility in the first statement described both the Scripture itself, calling it “free from all error” as well as its rule of faith and practice. In the new statement the term, “infallible” or “without error” is used only to describe the Scripture’s position as the only rule of faith and practice. At once some may say that this is just “nit-picking,” that is, criticizing small unimportant matters. But it actually changes the whole view of infallibility and is the very crux of the inerrancy problem in the Church today.

Let us look at the statements of some men who hold the Fuller position to see what this seemingly minor change in the statement does to their view of the Scripture. Dr. David Hubbard, President of Fuller, in his convocation address at the Seminary in 1976, claimed that, “Fuller Theological Seminary is as loyal to the trustworthiness of the Scripture as any institution.”

“However,” he went to say, “that to hold the view that the Bible was totally inerrant in every area in which it speaks is to be unbiblical.”²⁰ Dr. Hubbard claims to support inerrancy, but only in the areas where the Holy Spirit teaches the Church through the biblical writers. Or, as stated in the Seminary doctrinal statement, in areas where the Scripture is a “guide to faith and practice.” This position allows men to say they not only believe in inspiration, but also in inerrancy. But as we have seen, this is a limited inerrancy. To

them, the Bible is without error only when it speaks concerning faith and practice. These men would say it was misleading to use the term inerrant in other areas of the Scripture. So, although the claim is made for inerrancy, they believe the Bible contains errors and the new doctrinal statement at Fuller allows them to do this.

“So the debate rages, terms are changed, and new ones coined. ... All of this, so that men, proud of their intellectual attainments, may claim to believe the Scripture is inspired by God, but not without error.”

In the continuing effort to describe their changing position, some of these men have coined the term “limited inerrancy.” Of course the term itself is nonsense. Inerrancy is an absolute and one error destroys it. Stephen T. Davis, associate professor of Philosophy and Religion at Clairmont Men’s College in California, has tried to solve the problem by making a difference between infallibility and inerrancy. He uses infallibility as a technical term referring to the Scripture, then uses the term inerrancy to refer to areas of so-called unintended teaching. The Bible is infallible, according to this view, because it does not teach error. It is not inerrant, however, because it contains factual errors in the areas of unintended teaching.

Notice carefully now: This teaching enables men to claim to hold to inspiration and infallibility, when actually some see a limited inspiration and all of them see factual errors in the Scripture. This heresy has spread throughout the Church. Its appeal to the human intellect, coupled with its claim for orthodoxy, has engulfed many teachers, leaders, and institutions of higher learning. And, as we have seen, the adherents to this present heresy go to great lengths to hide the depth and reality of their changing position.

So the debate rages, terms are changed, and new ones coined. We have qualified inerrancy, limited inerrancy, Scripture made up of intended and unintended teaching, and infallibility without inerrancy. All of this, so that men, proud of their intellectual attainments, may

claim to believe the Scripture is inspired by God, but not without error. After a careful study of their position, the conclusion seems clearly to be that their view of inspiration is such as to hardly be inspiration at all in the historic Christian sense.

For all of their orthodox terminology, these men seem to have succumbed to the same German thought which gave birth to Karl Barth's Neo-Orthodoxy and its crisis revelation, as well as Rudolph Bultman's search for the historic Christ. For all of them, no matter how they express their weak view of inerrancy, are following closely the old German theologians such as Schleiermacher, who saw inspiration as a general term which applies to the whole Scripture in some loose sense rather than to the detailed parts. In the end, they will have no choice but to conclude that not all of the Scripture is equally inspired.

This view of inspiration, despite loud protestations to the contrary, changes their view of the Christian faith. It is no longer that of a Holy God revealing Himself and His salvation to lost man, which revelation must be accepted by simple child-like faith. But it is a religion of God's revealing Himself to man in a set of faulty writings which revelation must be discerned, determined, and understood solely by the reasoning power of highly educated men. Thus all holding this weak view of the Scripture are faced with a terrible dilemma: if God can only be known through the Holy Scripture and this revelation does in fact contain errors, then man's knowledge of God depends on his own intellectual ability to ascertain what is reliable in the Scripture and what is not. Simple faith is no longer the key to salvation and to divine knowledge: human reason is!

Reaping What Is Sown

Some of the principles on which Neo-Evangelicalism was founded, such as a refusal to speak out against doctrinal error and accommodating Bible interpretation to match so-called modern science, resulted in disobedience to the Scripture. Disobedience, the Bible warns us, always

results in reaping spiritual destruction and chaos (Gal 6:9). There is no more horrible example of this than the doctrinal odyssey into heresy of the brilliant and articulate Dr. Clark Pinnock.

In 1966 Dr. Pinnock wrote a booklet entitled *A Defense of Biblical Infallibility*.²¹ This was ranked among the best defenses of the historic Christian position on the Scripture. In it, Dr. Pinnock stated that the historic position of infallibility and inerrancy was the only possible one for a theology of revelation.

By 1976, the effect of Dr. Pinnock's Neo-Evangelical fellowship was being clearly seen. He had completely changed his position on inerrancy. Writing in the *Theological News and Notes*, Pinnock described his new position. He said, "Upholders of inerrancy would claim that an error in the unintended teachings of the Scripture is not really an error in Scripture."²² This is a frightening statement for if the unintended teachings are not Scripture, then we have the claim that not all the Bible is inspired. This gives us not only limited inerrancy, but limited inspiration. It is probably true that Dr. Pinnock would deny this conclusion, but it is the only honest one that can be made from this statement.

In 1987 the fruit of Dr. Pinnock's lower view of the Scripture had become very evident. Writing in *Christianity Today*, in an article entitled "Fire, then nothing" Dr. Pinnock denies the biblical teaching on hell switching to a belief of the annihilation of the souls of the wicked. He stated, "the traditional 'biblical' view of punishment is morally flawed..."²³

By 1990 Dr. Clark Pinnock's journey from orthodoxy into heresy had become even clearer. While he affirmed the fall into sin by Adam as a historical event he says, "We should not exaggerate the role of Adam, which, after all, is not much emphasized in Scripture..."²⁴ It is surprising that Dr. Pinnock who knows the Scripture very well should feel that the fall of Adam that caused man universally to fall into sin was not much emphasized. As a matter of fact, it is rather strongly emphasized in the Scripture. The Apostle

Paul parallels Adam's fall bringing death and sin into the world with the sacrifice on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, which offers life to this same sin-cursed world (Rom 5:12-17). Dr. Pinnock goes on to say that the Old Testament rather speaks about sin rising out of man's own perversity than Adam's, but the psalmist said that he was a sinner from his birth (Ps 51:5).

In his article *Predestination and Freewill*, Dr. Pinnock denies the omniscience of God. He says, "I soon realized something would have to be done about the received doctrine of God."²⁵ He also wrote in his chapter entitled "God Limits His Knowledge", "it is claimed that the biblical doctrine of creaturely freedom requires us to reconsider the conventional view of the omniscience of God."²⁶ To show how this affects his view of God further, he wrote "In terms of logic, it is obvious that a future free decision defined the way I define it cannot be known ahead of time by God or anyone else...."²⁷ Dr. Pinnock goes on to suggest that we should now read the Bible from the perspective of a God who faces the future as an open question rather than as one who has exhaustive knowledge of all future contingencies.

Because Dr. Pinnock refuses to agree that God is omniscient, he then also denies that He is immutable. He says, "While God is unchangeable in essence and character, He is changeable in His actions."²⁸ This is a far cry from the statement of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:11 that God works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will. Because Dr. Pinnock refuses to recognize that God knows all things, he then has to raise a question concerning Bible prophecy. He says that a high percentage of prophecy can be accounted for by one of three things: The announcement ahead of time of what God intends to do, conditional prophecies which leave the outcome open, and predictions based on God's exhaustive knowledge of the past and the present. But he sarcastically remarks that the crystal ball variety of divine omniscience is not biblical in origin. The Scripture however, is filled with examples which show the problems that Dr. Pinnock faces for limiting God's knowledge. On the night of the betrayal Jesus prophesied that all of His disciples

would fall away and that Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed (Matt 26:31,34). And we see that these prophecies were fulfilled (Matt 26:69-75).

The Neo-Evangelicals And The Charismatic Movement

We have seen that where there is no inerrant Scripture on which to base our faith, the church is open to every type of heresy and impurity of life. The newest phonema to hit the church scene has been the Charismatic movement. This movement is characterized by two main features. First, a belief in the resurgence of the sign gifts with a tremendous emphasis on these. And secondly, a watered down gospel, accompanied with the almost total ignorance of the doctrines of the Scripture. While the term “born again” is commonly used in true liberal fashion, each person or group may give its own meaning to the term. Because of a lack of Bible knowledge and obedience to the Word, we have seen the constant scandals of the charismatic tel-evangelists. Their excessive life-styles, supported by dishonesty and charlatanism used to defraud their followers out of millions of dollars, have shocked even the unbelieving world.

This movement has had universal appeal, reaching through almost every area of the church structure from the most staid sections of Roman Catholicism to the most liberal area of the WCC and everything in between. Because of the Neo-Evangelical refusal to speak out against error, this movement has begun to make great in-roads in evangelical circles.

At the Neo-Evangelical Second International Congress on World Evangelization in Manila, July of 1989, the charismatic participation and acceptance was at its highest level for any Neo-Evangelical gathering. The charismatics were welcomed as partners in the cause of world evangelization. Some complained that the charismatics were taking over the Lausanne movement. In answer to the complaint, Dr. Billy Graham’s brother-in-law, Leighton Ford, defended the Neo-Evangelical position by saying “in Lausanne we are bound to none and we exclude none.” As a result, there were tongues,

interpretations, and prophecies. A few spoke out in protest. Thomas Wang, congress director, resigned but the non-biblical, accommodating forces of the Neo-Evangelicals prevailed and Lausanne II was considered by many a historic water-shed in evangelical and charismatic relationships. Once again, we see the lack of courage and biblical obedience on the part of Neo-Evangelicals to warn the flock against danger.

It is not the purpose of this book to treat the problems of the Charismatic Movement. For those who are interested in a further study on this, see the author's books *The Charismata*, and *Some Thoughts on the Sign Gifts*; George E. Gardiner's excellent booklet *The Corinthian Catastrophe*; as well as *The New Tongues Movement* by John W. Cawood.

A Warning To Believers

The problems that have arisen as neo-evangelicals have left the Fundamentalist position are not matters of inconsequential differences. These men, in refusing to speak out against error, have allowed men into their midst who hold positions concerning the Scripture which are nothing less than heresy. Because of this view, men like Dr. Pinnock feel like they can become free thinkers, casting off the clear teachings of the Scripture to make human reason and understanding supreme, and thus are led into serious doctrinal error. Let us beware! If we do not stand openly for the truth, we will surely fall into the same error as the Neo-Evangelicals.

In light of the great falling away from the position of the inerrancy, Dr. Harold Lindsell, one of the early followers of neo-evangelicalism has written two extremely important books, which every Christian should read. First *The Battle for the Bible*, published by Zondervan in 1976, and then *The Bible in the Balance*, published by the same company, in 1979. In this latter book, on pages 319 and 320, the author says, "Within a decade or so Neo-Evangelicalism, that started so well and promised so much, was being assaulted from

within by increasing skepticism with regard to biblical infallibility or inerrancy.” He further writes,

Maybe it would be better to accept the word fundamentalist with all their perjorative attached to it by its detractors, Some evangelicals have already decided to go back to the use of the term fundamentalist. It is true this term is loaded and carries with it connotations which often do not express the true genius which lies behind the word, but it does have some distinct advantages. Liberals despise it, current advocates of limited inerrancy never use it about themselves. Scholars like James Barr and much academia look down their noses at it. Its theological dogmatism which includes intense opposition to syncretism, universalism, and the possibility that non-Christian religions are roads which lead to paradise sharpens its image and establishes its uniqueness.

We might say that perhaps the time has come when all true believers would re-emphasize the uniqueness of the Christian faith as it is based on an inerrant, holy Scripture, totally revealed by the Almighty God. Those who refuse to do this will soon be drawn into the same error that we have found the leaders of this movement enmeshed in today (Ps 22:18).

Notes

¹Dr. Billy Graham, *Eternity Magazine* (1958) as quoted by Dr. G.A. Weniger, “The Neo-Evangelicals and the Inerrancy of the Bible,” *The Sword of the Lord* (3/18/66).

²John A.T. Robinson, *But That I Can't Believe* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1967) p. 127.

³William Hamilton, *The Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Bulletin*, Vol. XXX, No. 2, Dec., 1957

⁴Dr. E. Stanley Jones, as quoted by Dr. Archer Weniger, *Blu-Print* (2/16/71)

⁵Keith Miller, *Faith at Work*, (10/75) p. 34.

⁶Rev. William Barclay, *Daily Bible Reading: The Gospel of John*, p. 56, as quoted by Dr. G. Archer Weniger, *The Blu-Print*, Vol. XXVI, No. 31 (9/6/75).

⁷*Ibid*, pp. 211-212.

⁸Ibid, pp. 205-207.

⁹Dr. Billy Graham, *Peace With God* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1953) p. 163.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 164.

¹¹Ibid, p. 169.

¹²George W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1973) p. 194.

¹³Robert Webber, *Eternity Magazine*, “Agenda for the Church, 1976 - 2000” (1/76) p. 16.

¹⁴Ibid, p. 17, 59.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 59.

¹⁶Ibid, p. 59

¹⁷Harvie M. Conn, *Contemporary Trends in Theology* (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1959) pp. 97-100.

¹⁸Harold Lindsell, *The Battle For the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976) p. 107.

¹⁹Ibid, p. 116

²⁰David Allan Hubbard, *Reflections on Fuller’s Theological Position and Role in the Church*, pp 1,3, as quoted in *The Bible in the Balance*, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976) p. 213.

²¹Clark Pinnock, *A Defense of Biblical Infallibility* (Puritan and Reformed Publishing Co., 1966).

²²Theological Crossfire, *From Augustine To Arminius: A Pilgrimage in Theology* , p 24.

²³*Christianity Today*, March 20, 1987.

²⁴*Theological Crossfire*, From Augustine To Arminius: A Pilgrimage in Theology, p 126.

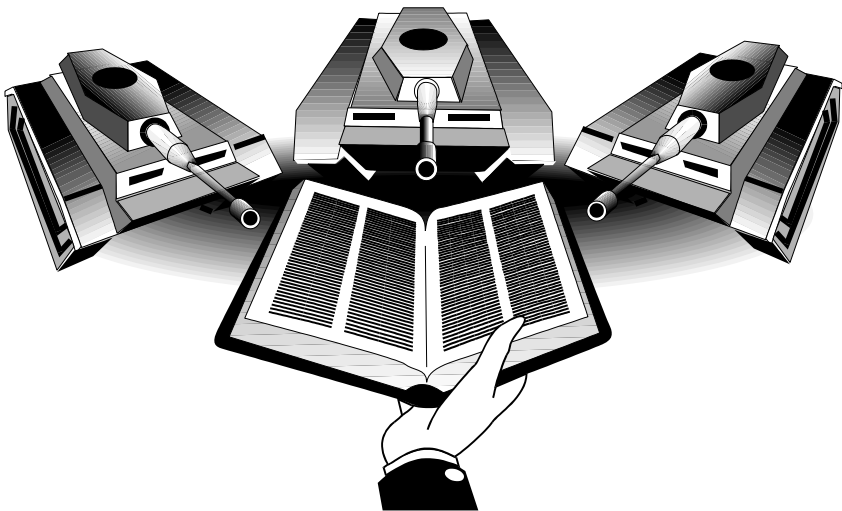
²⁵Ibid, p. 24.

²⁶Ibid, p. 138.

²⁷Ibid, p. 137.

²⁸*Perspectives on Evangelical Theology*, ed. Kenneth Kantzer and Stanley N. Grindy (Grand Rapids, Mich, 1979) pp. 37-42.

CHAPTER TWELVE SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FUNDAMENTALIST POSITION



Introduction

Since the advent of the Neo-Evangelical position and its ecumenical method of evangelism, the Fundamentalist position has been under stronger attack than at any time since the roaring Modernist-Fundamentalist conflict of the early part of the twentieth century. Many schools, missions and churches, founded as a result of that earlier conflict, have begun to desert the Fundamentalist cause which, for over half a century, has so strongly contended for the

“Faith of our Fathers.” They are now attempting to hold with the Neo-Evangelical what is no longer a “middle-of-the-road” position, but one which actually favors ecumenism. As we have already seen, the Neo-Evangelical position ever since its founding some twenty years ago has been one of rapid deterioration from the fundamentals of the faith.

In the light of the great battle now facing the Fundamentalist, it would be well for us to review our position once again. Let us consider our stand in the light of the accusations hurled against us, not by liberal heretics, but by our brothers in the Lord who, just a few short years ago, were part of the Fundamentalist movement and its fight against heresy.

Accusations And Answers

A. “Fundamentalists are Divisive and Sometimes Uncouth”

The accusations, often made by liberals, and now made by the Neo-Evangelicals, is that the Fundamentalist deals with errors and personalities, instead of just preaching the truth. However, an examination of the Scripture, will show that not only the great preachers of the New Testament, but our Lord Himself dealt with error. These, whose examples and teachings we are to follow, give no idea of “infiltration,” “accommodation,” or “dialogue,” with those who hold false doctrine. Instead they openly recognized errors and warned believers concerning them.

John The Baptist

1. John Preached Outside the Great Religious Organization of His Day

John totally rejected the tactic of infiltrating the ranks of organized religious unbelievers. If he had desired to do this, he would have preached in the synagogues or the Temple porch. He

would have cultivated the friendship of the rabbis and priests, especially those who were well known, in order to gain their support for his ministry. John could easily have done this because he was qualified for the priesthood. His father, Zacharias, was a priest and his mother descended from Aaron (Luke 1:5). So John had family connections he could have used to make his ministry acceptable. Certainly if he had preached in the normal places many more people would have heard him.

Instead, we find that John isolated himself completely from the corrupt religious leaders of the Temple and the synagogues to preach outside the city area (Matt 3:1,2). He did this despite the fact that there were some believers within the organized religious program of the day, such as Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:25; 36-38).

John also rejected the formalism of his day. His clothes, food, and actions were odd, to say the least. In fact, according to the testimony of our Lord, people thought John was “possessed with a demon” (Matt 11:18). Such strange action, while not acceptable to the world, was in full accordance with the Word of God which John evidently took to mean literally what it said (Isa 40:3). No doubt, many of John’s priestly friends reminded him that as a member of the Covenant Nation, as one of God’s chosen people, it was necessary to show a united front to a sinful world. But John rejected the heresy and apostasy around him and walked in obedience to the Lord.

Despite his strange actions, his powerful preaching began to attract crowds. What a mighty preacher he must have been! He had no proper credentials, no proper dress, no proper pulpit, and he performed no miracles, yet the multitudes came to hear him (Matt 3:5,6).

2. John Rejected Ecumenical Dialogue with Religious Leaders

John was such a powerful preacher and was drawing such crowds that the leaders of the influential religious factions among the Jews came out to be a part of the campaign. Perhaps they felt they

could clean up John a bit, tone down his message a little, and use him to get more people coming to the synagogue and joining their particular religious factions.

“John never became big in the religious world of his time....But he obeyed God, and in the annals of heaven, John is listed as one of the greatest servants of the Lord”

John spotted these men among his crowd: the Pharisees, orthodox by profession, but hypocrites and defamers of the name of God by actions; the Sadducees, the new theologians of their day, who denied the actuality of miracles, life after death, and a literal interpretation of the Holy Scripture. These men represented the same scene we have today in the World Council of Churches. Everything from sinful, hypocritical orthodoxy to outright heresy! And John the Baptizer blasted them openly before all the crowd! He did not enter into dialogue. He did not call a private meeting. He did not change his terminology; nor did he try to infiltrate their ranks. He pointed these men out as the heretics and hypocrites they were. John didn't even use nice language. He called them “vipers” and warned them of impending judgment and the fires of hell (Matt 3:7-11).

3. John Refused to Cultivate the Favor of Unbelieving Rulers by any Compromise of His Message or Actions.

John had what might have been his big chance to influence the corrupt government of his province. He might have become a spiritual advisor to Herod Antipas, governor of Palestine. But Herod was living in sin, and John not only refused to overlook this sin, but evidently he openly pointed it out, calling Herod by name and condemning him for his actions on more than one occasion (Luke 3:19-20).

4. Conclusion

John never became big in the religious world of his time. In fact, without the Bible record, we would probably never have learned of

his existence. His ministry was short. His preaching against sin, and his boldness in the ministry cost John his life. But he obeyed God, and in the annals of heaven, John is listed as one of the greatest servants of the Lord (Matt 11:11).

Jesus Christ

1. The Loving Lord

In Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior of the world, we see the greatest example of love, compassion, and concern that the world has ever known. It caused Him to sorrow over Jerusalem because He loved its people; but they would not repent (Matt 23:37). It caused Him to forgive Peter when he denied Him in His greatest hour of need (Mark 14:27-30; Luke 22:31-34). And it caused Him to deal lovingly with Thomas, who after all the Lord's teaching, was weak in the faith (John 20:24-29). It was this great love that sent Him to Calvary to die for the sins of the world.

2. The Accusing Lord

Despite the great love of the Lord for sinners, His ministry included the naming of sin, the pointing out of error and the marking of those leaders who rejected the truth.

a. In the Temple

Perhaps of all the acts of the Lord Jesus Christ, the most surprising is His action in the Temple. It was in that sacred place, where men called upon Jehovah, the only true and living God, that we have the only record of the Lord using physical violence.

It had become the custom for those who sold animals for sacrifice and who changed foreign coins for the temple fees, to move right into the Temple to conduct their business. From the Lord's words, we know these men not only desecrated the Temple with their desire for profit, but were also dishonest in their business dealings

(Matt 21:13; Luke 19:46). Perhaps a few discreet words with the priests could have had these men moved to some other area quietly with the dignity due to the Temple and those in the service of God. But we shall never know! For Jesus raged into the Temple, turned over the tables and scattered coins in every direction, using a whip to drive the animals and their owners from the Temple. One can imagine the commotion: people running in every direction, perhaps some screaming out while others protested this break with accepted tradition. This action of our Lord was rather uncouth by human standards. But from that point on, no one doubted where He stood on the matter of doing business in the Temple or cheating in business anywhere. He may have been marked as an odd person, but He was never confused with those who made merchandise of the worship of the God of Israel.

b. The Pharisees

The Pharisees were evidently a group that developed over the years from among the Scribes. The Lord often grouped them together. These men had taken God's law, which was meant to point people to the truth, and so added to it that it had become a burden which obscured the truth. This was, in the truest sense, a perversion of the Scripture.

Jesus deliberately pointed out their hypocrisy and misinterpretation of the Scripture by His actions. When He healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath, He knew the Scribes and Pharisees were watching (Luke 6:6-9). Before all, He pointed out their sin. They were furious with the Lord and began scheming to get rid of Him (Luke 6:11).

When the Lord was invited to eat in the home of a Pharisee, He took the occasion to pointedly condemn their actions, calling them fools! (Luke 11:37-44). When one of the guests protested that the Lord's statement also insulted the lawyers, the Lord, in return, blasted them even worse than He had the Pharisees (Luke 11:45). The Lord said they had taken away the opportunity for men to know

the truth. They not only failed to accept it themselves, but also kept others from it (Luke 11:52).

We see that Jesus accepted an invitation to fellowship with them, but He used it to point out their sin and apostasy in a manner that His hosts considered insulting. He was in no way “sensitive” to the feelings of His audience, but sensitive only to the truth that needed to be presented. By His directness, Jesus lost any opportunity to be invited back. In fact, from that time on, those who had invited Him opposed Him fiercely (Luke 11:53, 54). While the Lord was never invited back, He was also never mistaken for a Pharisee or heretic and any who heard Him preach had an opportunity to really understand His message. We might wish that Dr. Graham had come away from Colgate-Rochester Seminary leaving behind the same feeling and bringing with him the same clearness of testimony. (See chapter 12, pages 151-152).

We must also note that not only did the Lord openly and clearly point out the apostasy and sin in the lives of the Scribes and Pharisees, but He warned others against them. Before what may have been one of the largest crowds the Lord preached to during His ministry, He warned against the danger of these apostate men. He named their group and named their sin (Luke 12:1). Later in His ministry, He warned the crowd against the Scribes, calling them by name and announcing their sin as well as their condemnation for all to hear (Luke 20:45-27).

c. The Sadducees

The other major religious faction active during the days of the Lord was the Sadducees. They were not so much an organization, but rather a school of theological thought. Like the New Theologians of our day, they denied the miraculous power of God, including the resurrection of the dead.

It is interesting to note that although the Pharisees and Sadducees not only held opposing theological views, but also opposed one

another in a constant power struggle within Judaism, the Lord lumped them together as apostate teachers of which His people should beware (Matt 16:6).

“...the Lord opposed apostasy clearly, strongly, and with sharp biting words, that the danger might be clear to the precious lambs of His flock.”

When these same Sadducees came to Jesus and ridiculed the resurrection through a hypothetical question, the Lord pointed directly to their problem. We notice He did not say that eschatology was not central, nor suggest they talk about matters on which they agreed or at least that were directly involved with salvation. The Lord told them that they were in error because they neither knew the Scripture nor the power of God (Matt 22:29).

3. Conclusion

We see then that, as part of His ministry, the Lord preached against apostasy and sin. In so doing He not only named the sin, but the personalities involved in the sin. When given an opportunity to address heretics, He always called out their heresy clearly. As a result, He made many enemies, but He also made His position absolutely clear. We might also call to mind the fact that the Lord addressed these perverters of the Scripture by some rather uncouth, uncomplimentary terms at times. He said that those who rejected His message had the Devil as their father and were doing his work (John 8:44,45). On one occasion, His disciples mentioned that the Pharisees were offended at the Lord’s teaching (Matt 15:12). The Lord said not to bother with them that they were “the blind leading the blind” (Matt 15:14). And, finally, He called the Scribes and Pharisees “whitened sepulchres.” They looked good on the outside, but within they were filled with corruption and death (Matt 23:27).

From these examples, we can see the Lord opposed apostasy clearly, strongly, and with sharp biting words, that the danger might be clear to the precious lambs of His flock.

The Apostle Peter

The first sermon preached after the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, was to the Jews gathered in Jerusalem (Acts 2:14). As a nation, these people had condemned and crucified Christ (Acts 2:23). They had totally rejected His claim to Messiahship and refused the Old Testament teachings which Christ claimed referred to Himself. We must note that as Peter preached to this crowd, it was this very sin of rejecting and crucifying Christ of which he spoke. He insisted that they had indeed rejected the Christ of God, who was Jesus (Acts 2:36). He insisted that in order to obtain salvation they must receive the truth and accept Jesus as Savior. He warned them to leave the wicked generation of Jews who were, for the most part, rejecting the message of salvation (Acts 2:39,40). This direct condemnation of their actions upset the Jews, but many received Peter's message and were saved. These new believers left their former position with the rejecting Jews to fellowship with the Church (Acts 2:41).

Notice, Peter preached at the one point where they were in greatest error: their rejection of Jesus Christ as the *only means of salvation offered by God*. He not only preached that Christ was the only Savior, but clearly noted that they had rejected Him and would be lost if they did not accept Him. Peter was not presenting a theological positional paper for consideration, but he was preaching salvation and condemnation on the basis of acceptance or rejection of a physically crucified and physically risen Lord. From Peter's viewpoint, there was no room for dialogue or discussion. It was either accept or be eternally damned.

If some of our Neo-Evangelical brothers would preach this kind of sermon to their World Council of Churches' gatherings, it would be their last address to them. But perhaps some of those from that apostate group would truly be saved.

Again and again, this first great preacher of the Christian Church set the pattern of evangelistic preaching. It was not an acceptable

pattern in the first century any more than it is today. But it is a God-given pattern that openly points out men's sin and their need of a Savior. It clearly outlines who the Savior is, what He is, and how He saves. It is a message of definite absolutes, with no room for discussion or compromise. While this message causes those who reject it to turn away, insulted and angry because of the clarity of its condemnation, it offers salvation to any who will believe.

The Apostle Paul

1. Preached a Clear Message of Absolutes

As the Apostle Paul began his ministry, the Church had grown and local assemblies were scattered far and wide. Into these assemblies came men, some of whom were no doubt believers, who held false doctrine or advocated sinful living. The Apostle's cold, hard condemnation of these men is well known to all. In his preaching, he was following the pattern set by Christ and followed by Peter: Preach clearly concerning the sin that is holding people from the truth of salvation or leading them into apostasy. Don't spare anyone's feelings. Make your position open and clear!

2. Preached Against Apostasy and Apostate Teachers

Paul spoke in the strongest and most definite terms concerning those who taught false doctrine. They were accursed or condemned, no matter who they were. As far as Paul was concerned, there was no message from God, other than that which was preached by the Apostles (Gal 1:8,9). Not only were these men condemned, but they were to be marked for the divisions they caused by the teaching of contrary doctrine and **they were to be avoided!** (Rom 16:17).

3. Named Apostate Teachers and Their False Doctrine

Paul also named men involved in heresy as well as pointing out their false doctrine. He called Hymenaeus, Alexander and Philetus

“blasphemers” for teaching that the resurrection was already past (1 Tim 1:19, 20; 2 Tim 2:17, 18). This doctrine was probably much in line with the heresy of today which denies a physical return of the Lord.

John The Beloved

“Called for Complete Separation from Apostate Teachers”

Of all the disciples, John gives the strongest picture of gentleness of manner. And yet his stand against heresy was the same as the more forceful Peter and Paul. Men teaching false doctrine should not be welcomed into a believer’s home, because this is considered helping in the evil work of these false teachers (2 John 10,11).

Conclusion

There can be no question from these foregoing Scripture portions that men teaching heresy or involved in sin should be exposed. They should be named and their sin identified. Those teaching false doctrine should be marked and believers should be warned against them. Furthermore, believers should not be found fellowshiping with these who spread heresy in the Church and endanger the flock. This position is clearly and consistently presented by the Holy Scripture. It is God’s way! Any deviation is disobedience, regardless of the good motive that may cause the deviation. Therefore, no blessing, but only danger, can come from positions of compromise, whether it be accommodation, infiltration or some more comfortable relationship between believers and those in apostasy or following heresy.

Unity is for Believers Walking in Obedience Only

Those who reject the message will be divided from us. This is what the Lord Himself said when He preached on earth.

Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three (Luke 12:51, 52).

“The separatist position and the fight against heresy is right.... because God demands it from His people and therefore there is no other path of blessing and safety.”

The separatist position and the fight against heresy is right. It is not right because it is nice, comfortable or acceptable. Neither is it right because, humanly speaking, it seems to be the best way to spread the Gospel. It is right because God demands it from His people and therefore there is no other path of blessing and safety. There is no other way to be sure that our spiritual progeny will preach the same soul-saving Gospel which was committed to us by those who have gone before in the service of Christ.

B. “Fundamentalists Fail to Recognize That There Are Christian Brothers in Denominations Connected With The World Council of Churches.”

More and more we hear the cry from the Neo-Evangelicals that we must recognize the Universal Church and the fact that some of our brothers are involved in the apostate World Council. Dr. Paul Reese, in a magazine editorial written in 1968 stated,

Furthermore, whether we have formal connections with the World Council or not, we are obligated to acknowledge that we have Christian brothers whose denominations are in the Council.

We have already quoted Dr. Robert Webber, who said,

Many of us are still somewhat ingrown in the sense that we have a hard time recognizing the historic Protestant churches as well as the Roman and Greek Churches as part of the body of Christ.¹

We find in this statement a typical Neo-Evangelical misuse of terms which is both confusing and misleading. First of all, it is perfectly clear from the Scripture that the Universal Church is not made up of organizations but of believers. The body of Christ is composed of men and women saved through faith in Jesus Christ and baptized into His body, the Church, by the Holy Spirit. The fact that there may be believers in the apostate church groups certainly does not make these groups part of the body of Christ. As a matter of fact, the Lord, speaking about just such an apostate group says,

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth (Rev 3:15, 16).

An organization that remains in apostasy will be rejected by Christ even though they may consider themselves a part of the church. Yes, we should remember that there are brothers in the apostate and compromising churches. But all we can do for them is pray that God will be able to show them the error of their ways and that they will see the necessity of separating themselves from those who walk in disobedience. Certainly, because these brothers are compromising, is no reason for us to do the same, or to associate with them, and thus endanger our own stand for the truth.

If we do not carefully watch our relationship with believers who insist on staying in apostate church groups, we will end up with the same fuzzy position that the Neo-Evangelical holds, and which is so clearly illustrated for us in a recent issue of *Christianity Today*. This particular issue of the magazine started out with an excellent editorial that strongly condemned the drift of evangelicals away from the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. The article quotes J.I. Packer, who said,

...not only evangelicals, but the majority of Christians through the ages have accepted the trustworthiness of the Bible in all that it teaches, including history and natural science. Although the Bible is not a textbook of history or science, what it

teaches in those areas, too, is truth and is to be received as such.²

The excellent editorial ends with this stern warning.

The first need of Christians and the Church today is to start at the beginning to affirm the historic Christian assertion that the Bible is true and trustworthy in the whole and in all its parts.³

But this tremendous article, in what is a leading Neo-Evangelical magazine, is followed just five pages later with a large, two column, one-half page advertisement of a book by E. Stanley Jones! This man has, throughout his life and in his publications, denied the verbal infallibility of the Scripture and the truth that the New Testament is a revelation from God! (See Neo-Evangelicalism, Chapter 11, Page 126). We wonder if it never occurred to the editor, whose concern for the deterioration of the evangelicals view of the Scripture is so eloquently stated, that it is this very type of action on the part of the Neo-Evangelicals like himself that has led to this sorry state. We cannot walk hand in hand with apostasy without being tainted by its falsehood. We cannot lead our people into this kind of fellowship, and expect to lead them out unmarked. If we expose believers to danger by holding up the work of heretics as examples, we will someday stand before the Chief Shepherd of the Flock. Then we will have to give an account for the destruction our foolish actions have wrought.

We are not discussing guilt, intent or sincerity. We are discussing danger! Spiritual danger from a contagious error that is spreading like “wild-fire” among God’s people. That disease is compromise of the basic truths of the Scripture in order to form a broader base of so-called “Christian fellowship.” The only cure is marking and isolation. History has proven over and over again that liberalism brings death. Ecumenism never brings liberals to the truth, but often brings those in the truth to error. Yes, there are believers in the WCC, but we should not join them in their error.

This strange teaching concerning the Universal Church and Christian fellowship on the part of Neo-Evangelicals, has led them to greatly enhance the position of the WCC. It is not surprising then that in a survey made among “forty prominent evangelicals” the following shocking truth was revealed.

...signs of ‘grass roots’ ecumenicity, such as the charismatic and Jesus movements and Catholic renewal, won high praise.⁴

The Neo-Evangelical movement was founded with the idea of refusing to deal with error and the personalities involved with error. The result of this refusal to obey the admonition of the Scripture is already very clear. Believers who accept the Scripture as the only guide of faith, as well as the only basis of Christian fellowship, are becoming fewer and fewer as the return of the Lord draws near. The leaders of the Neo-Evangelical Movement may not have changed their own doctrinal position, but they stand guilty of having endangered tens of thousands of God’s people by introducing them to close fellowship and cooperation with those who hold to heresy and those who are fellowshiping with apostasy.

C. “Fundamentalists Are too ‘Simplistic’ to Meet the Needs of This Modern Complex World”

For many years the liberals and modernists have claimed that the Fundamentalists over-simplify things. To say that one over-simplifies is basically a claim that one lacks knowledge and mental ability. Or at least that one fails to use his knowledge and mental ability, to think things through to the fullest extent, and come up with an answer or lack of the same that shows the complexity of the given problem or situation. So, failing to see the complexities of the world and its related problems, the Fundamentalist gives answers that are easy to understand and dogmatically forthright. This the intellectual finds disconcerting and completely frustrating.

Yet the whole problem of man wandering from the faith seems to rest just at this point. The Christian faith is a very simple one. The basic truths of the Gospel can be explained in a very short time. The

simplicity of the cross and its message has been the very thing that has driven the large masses of humanity away from the Gospel. This message is very humiliating as it denies man a chance to use the intellect, in which he places so much pride. The message is that man is hopelessly lost and can do nothing to save himself. He must accept the atoning work of Christ as offered by God's grace.

But because the world rejects a simple message, we see many Evangelicals moving in the direction of a complex theology that can only be understood by intellectuals. While this type of theology fits in with the world system, it leaves simple people, such as the fishermen of Galilee, standing outside, unable to comprehend the message God has for them. The reason given for this move toward intellectualism is that only this type of theology is acceptable to the world today. Hearing this reason given over and over again as an excuse for all kinds of conformity to the world, we are reminded of the words of Jeremiah who, viewing the apostasy of God's people in his day, cried out:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:
who can know it? (Jer 17:9).

We must ask ourselves if this accommodation to the world's system is to make the Gospel presentable, or to make the Christian presentable? With Jeremiah, the Apostle Paul recognized that within man there is nothing good. Only salvation through the mercy and grace of God can deliver man from his wicked lost condition. It is good for God's people to remember from what condition they came and the danger of the old nature deceiving them with that which appeals to human pride in the guise of service to the Lord.

Many church leaders today claim that the world is changing and therefore we need to change the presentation of the Gospel message. The message must be preached by well educated men who can meet the world on its own terms. They say that the message of men like Moody and Sunday, because they were given in over-simplistic Bible terms, will not be acceptable to modern man. They are right. That message will not be acceptable to modern man. But it is

unacceptable, not because man is modern, but because man is sinful. Not only is God's message of salvation not acceptable to the masses of modern men, it was not acceptable to the masses of ancient men either. From Cain to the multitudes destroyed in the flood, on down to the religious leaders of Jesus' day, the message was unacceptable because it leaves no room for the glorification of the human intellect. Therefore the greatest enemy of the Gospel, so far as the young preachers and teachers of the Church are concerned, is the human desire for recognition and acceptability. Somewhere along the way, the Church must decide if it will follow the crucified, risen Lord, or strive for acceptance in the world's system. Somewhere along the line the decision must be made as to whether we will stand with Christ and be ridiculed by the world or desert Him and be accepted by it.

The great danger of a middle-of-the road stance is that the pull toward acceptability is increased since that position is so much closer to the world. They say that we should not change the Gospel, just present it in a modern setting. We should not compromise with anyone, just don't be so dogmatic and uncouth. Adjust a little to the times and reach people that the isolated Fundamentalist cannot reach.

The results of this position has been great crowds at evangelistic meetings and huge mobilization efforts to reach vast multitudes of people with the message. But these efforts, which give impressive numbers of people contacted and reported to have "committed themselves to Christ," have not resulted in new churches and very seldom in a real insurgence of new converts to Bible-believing churches. It has, instead, resulted in confusion on the part of many who seem to feel they can add a conversion experience onto whatever their former beliefs were and continue on in life unaffected, except for the feeling that they are now more sure of heaven.

"The middle-of-the-road position has brought greater confusion on the Church scene than any other one factor in modern times."

The middle-of-the-road position has brought greater confusion on the Church scene than any other one factor in modern times. This confused scene reminds us of the question of the day: “Will our spiritual sons and daughters defend the faith”? Or, if the Lord tarries, will we leave them behind in church groups dominated by unbelievers? Are we presenting a faith with no personal cross to bear and no crown to win; a faith totally lacking in any understanding of the shame of the cross? Does our message present a faith that leaves its followers perfectly comfortable with men who deny the inspiration of the Scripture and many other major doctrines of the Christian faith?

We must conclude that the Church does not need more scholars in this age, but more humble men. It does not need to move closer to the world, but further away. It does not need to ease the difference between faithfulness to the whole truth and compromise, but to stamp this difference indelibly on the minds of men, for that difference may someday be clearly marked as heaven or hell; and it will be an eternal difference.

If this is over-simplification, then this is what we need. If this position causes misunderstanding, then this is what must happen. If, as true believers, we cannot show the world the difference between the hopeless philosophy and religions of unregenerate men and the simple salvation by God’s grace and the new life it brings, then we have no message worth preaching. And our spiritual descendants will have a faith that so resembles that of the world’s religious systems that they will find no need to defend it at all.

Conclusion

The lines have been drawn and we must make a choice. We can either be a defender of the faith as it was committed to our fathers and fellowship with those of like mind, or we can be the friend of heretics and apostates and travel with them. There is really no middle-of-the-road. One either compromises or one does not. The result of Neo-Evangelicalism’s middle-of-the-road program of

infiltration has left an unbelievable situation for Christian workers. It is not a situation which is good or right. It is a situation that every right thinking child of God must speak out against.

To me it is unthinkable that believers should be criticized for refusing to fellowship with evangelistic and other church efforts that cooperate with men and women who have sworn allegiance to the apostate church of Rome: a church whose history runs knee-deep in the blood of Christian martyrs; a history by the way, which its leaders have never repudiated! I find it hard to believe that godly pastors and missionaries should be condemned for failing to join mass rallies where apostate, unbelieving bishops and other religious leaders sit in prominent places, smiling and nodding pleasantly while the Gospel is preached carefully in terms which they rarely find irritating and never find embarrassing. And it is amazing to me that true believers should be called “divisive” because they refuse to applaud evangelistic efforts which send inquirers to churches that deny the Deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Scripture and the need of the very salvation the inquirer has come to seek.

Yet such is the position today, brought about by the Neo-Evangelical movement and those who follow its evangelistic efforts. Each believer must decide where he is going to stand. It is a choice that, unfortunately, will divide, not just unbelievers from believers, but brothers in Christ from one another. We will either go God’s way or man’s way. There is no middle-of-the-road, there never has been and there never will be. The choice must be made. And the choice we make today, if the Lord tarries, will affect the future of the Church and the spiritual heritage of our sons and daughters and the Faith they will hold in this lost and dying world.

We must conclude that the only hope for the Church, America and the world is to return to the “Faith of our Fathers” with its literal interpretation of the Scripture, the atonement through faith in Christ which we find on its pages, and the resulting life of Christian values and witness. History bears testimony to the faithfulness of God to

His people, if they will but repent and turn again to Him with all of their hearts.

If my people, which are called my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (2 Chron 7:14).

Notes

¹Robert Webber, *Eternity Magazine* (1/76) “Agenda for the Church: 1976-2000” pp. 17, 59.

²James I. Packer, “*Fundamentalism and the Word of God*” as quoted by an Editorial, *Christianity Today* (1/17/75).

³“How Far Can We Trust the Bible?” *Christianity Today* (1/17/75) pp. 24, 25.

⁴Susan T. Lutz, *Evangelical News Letter* (1/2/76), *A Bicentennial Survey of American Churches*.

WILL OUR SONS DEFEND THE FAITH?

*By the power of Truth unchanging
Working in the lives of men,
God did raise a godly movement
From a humble little band.
By His grace he set a fire
Burning well within their hearts,
To dispel the clouds of darkness
Which had come unto these parts.*

*Through the years of change and challenge
Came the testings not a few
When their faithfulness was threatened,
When they needed to be true!
But the Truth which God had given
They did steadfastly defend
'Gainst the waves of false religion
Which assailed on every hand.*

*Now the call has come upon them
To prepare the way ahead.
As to Moses came the wisdom
To train Joshua as the head.
Who will keep the fires burning
When their strength has ebbed away?
Who will bear this awesome burden
In this great, momentous day?*

*Let the ones whom God has chosen
Be resolved to take the lead,
With their goal: to keep on doing
What their predecessors did!
Lord most gracious, most abundant,
Grant to us this prayer, we plead,
Grant us sons who will be faithful,
Grant us sons to meet the need!*

C.S.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Chapter 1: In God We Trust

1. In the earliest settlements of the American Colonies could unbelievers take part in government? Why or why not?
2. Who were the “Pilgrims”?
3. After World War I what forces or factors in America worked against national morality?

Chapter 2: The Decline and Decay

1. With whom did the United States make an improper alliance during World War II?
2. What became unconstitutional in America according the United States Supreme Court in 1963?

Chapter 3: Nothing Sacred

1. How would you describe the condition of American society in the 1700’s and 1800’s with regard to the Christian faith?
2. Why is it difficult to distinguish between a philosopher and a liberal theologian?
3. Briefly state what Immanuel Kant (1742-1804) meant by the terms: a. “Phenomena”; b. “Noumena” ; and c. “the categorical imperative”
4. Briefly explain what is meant by Hegel’s “dialectics.”
5. Name at least two systems of thought deeply influenced by Hegel’s philosophy.

Chapter 4: The Enemy Within

1. Geographically where did liberal theology originate?

2. What happened at Harvard that was an important event in its move away from Christianity?
3. Complete the following sentence. “The desire for acceptability made the first step of _____ seem necessary. Once the first step was taken, the trail went downhill rapidly.”
4. In what decades did the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy hit the headlines in America?
5. What often happened to the institutions founded by true believers who remained within their liberal denominations?

Chapter 5: Where There Is No Vision

1. How do liberal and neo-orthodox theologians tend to use traditional language of the Christian faith?
2. Briefly summarize the four major tenets of the “Social Gospel.”
3. In what sense is the Bible the Word of God according to Neo-Orthodoxy?
4. In your opinion what makes the teachings of Karl Barth so dangerous?

Chapter 6: The New Theology

1. Who is the proponent of New Theology discussed in this chapter?
2. In what sense are “myths” true according to New Theology?
3. What is the meaning of the crucifixion according to New Theology?
4. How does New Theology view: a. Christ’s resurrection? b. Christ’s return? c. Hell?
5. Explain New Theology’s view of God.

Chapter 7: Situation Ethics

1. Who wrote the book on new morality entitled *Situation Ethics*?
2. According to situation ethics what is the ultimate norm of Christian conduct?
3. How does situation ethics view standards of right and wrong?
4. What does the Bible teach about man's ability to make morally correct decisions on his own.?
5. Cite an example of situation ethics in modern society?

Chapter 8: The Liberal Legacy

1. Who founded Union Theological Seminary in the 1830's?
2. Name two liberal theologians who taught at Union?
3. What was the condition of Union Seminary when *Will Our Sons* was first written?
4. How does the numerical growth and financial status of conservative and fundamental churches in America compare to that of the mainline liberal denominations?
5. Thought Question: Do liberals establish new churches and Christian institutions? Why or why not?

Chapter 9: The Theology of Secularization

1. Why did the heirs of the liberal legacy turn to the theology of secularization?
2. Who wrote the book entitled *The Secular City* which popularized secularism?
3. How does the theology of secularization view evangelism?
4. What is the aim of secularization?
5. What three major biblical points does Harvey Cox claim support the theology of secularization?

Chapters 10: Neo-Evangelicalism, Part I

1. Who coined the term “Neo-Evangelical”?
2. What was the failure of Fundamentalism according to Neo-Evangelical leaders?
3. According to Bernard Ramm what is the general rule by which we can tell whether something in the Bible is inerrant or not?
4. Critique the following statements by Harold Ockenga, “the Neo-Evangelical has changed its strategy from one of separation to one of infiltration...Instead of attack upon error, the Neo-Evangelicals proclaim the great historic doctrines of Christianity.”

Chapter 11: Neo-Evangelicalism, Part II

1. Who is the father of the neo-evangelical method?
2. Why is the statement that the inerrancy of Scripture should not be our ground of fellowship so dangerous?
3. What errors does Clark Pinnock teach?

Chapter 12: Some Thoughts On The Fundamentalist Position

1. What three accusations brought against “Fundamentalists” are treated in this chapter?
2. What lessons can be learned from the ministry of John the Baptist about being a “separatist”?
3. Give an example from the ministry or teachings of each of the following which supports the separatist position: a. Peter; b. Paul; c. John
4. Since there are some true believers in mainline Protestant churches, such as the United Methodist Church, why can't we fellowship with their organizations as a part of the Body of Christ?

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Rev Dan Ebert III and his sons have been serving the Lord as American missionaries to the Philippines. Ever since he wrote his book *Will Our Sons Defend the Faith?* in 1975, several thousand copies have been printed and circulated.

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