

REMINDER

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REVISITED

For some time now, I have been tracking something called the "*Emergent Church Movement*" (also known as the "*Emerging Church*"). I don't want to assume that everybody out there is up to speed on what I'm talking about, so first a few words of definition. At some point in the mid-1990's the moniker "*Emerging Church*" surfaced out of the Young Leadership Network. It came from the notion that, because the culture has changed, a new church should emerge in response. Declaring themselves to be the answer to reach the so-called postmodern generation, Emergents claim to have explored all of the avenues of what the Church has historically been, only to find that little or none of it satisfied them. The common bond of the Emergents was and still is a general dissatisfaction for Bible-believing Christianity, though nearly all of them claim to be "Evangelicals"!

Like many in the various "isms" before them, Emergents set forth to tackle a seemingly noble cause. They appeared to want desperately to reach a lost generation. However, it soon became clear that no matter how zealous Emergents were, the message they offered to their target postmoderns was *not* the authentic biblical model. Almost before even taking flight, the Emergents veered sideways into the ditch of heretical thinking, doctrine, and practice. Their unorthodox view of the Christian faith, including doctrine and *solo scriptura*, aided in drawing many who were seeking a self-styled Christianity rather than the biblical version. Those who came early to this perilous party also brought volunteers and funding to the soon-to-be-famous heretic leaders and, in the eyes of some, their very presence added credibility just because the seats were being filled on Sundays. After quickly jettisoning the constraints of biblical hermeneutics and (God forbid) sound doctrine, Emergents picked up steam (and press) as being "hip," "different" and "refreshing." In reality, though, "hip" transposes into "we'll accept almost anything," "different" means "far out...really far out," and "refreshing" symbolizes "any Wiccan or Buddhist will feel right at home with us."

I know many Emergent sympathizers would object and say that I am generalizing. However, that simply is not the case. Even without much space to elaborate in this article, and even as difficult as "Emergent Speak" can be to decipher, once one boils it down, just a partial outline of Emergent philosophies indicates glaring flaws.

To Emergents, Christianity is:

- Experience over Reason
- Subjective Feelings over Absolute Truth
- Social Action over Eternity
- Images over Words
- Spirituality over Doctrine
- Earthly Justice over Salvation

An examination of only a few quotes from Emergent leaders illustrates not only some of these wacky ideas but also the sobering reality that Emergent leaders and the tens of thousands following them are indeed in very dangerous territory.

Listen to what Brian McLaren, from a July 2005 PBS special on the Emerging Church had to say about the movement:

"The church has been preoccupied with the question, 'What happens to your soul after you die?' As if the reason for Jesus (continued inside)



coming can be summed up in, 'Jesus is trying to help get more souls into heaven, as opposed to hell, after they die.' I just think a fair reading of the Gospels blows that out of the water. I don't think that the entire message and life of Jesus can be boiled down to

that bottom line."

Here are more examples from leaders in the Emergent Church Movement. Read carefully what they are actually saying:

"Repentance is not turning from sin. It is a 'celebration' of life in Christ. Anyone who tells you that you need to repent is not talking about Christianity."

- Rob Bell, "The 'gods' Aren't Angry Tour," Nov. 16, 2007, Dallas, Texas.



Doug Pagitt, Emerging Leader, author and pastor of Solomon's Porch in Minneapolis, was asked *"Is homosexuality incompatible with Christian faith?"* Pagitt simply replied: *"NO. Being Gay and Christian is not a contradiction in any way."* - Quoted by Mark Driscoll in "Why I Left the Emerging Church" at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fall 2007.



"Missional Christian faith asserts that Jesus did not come to make some people saved and others condemned. Jesus did not come to help some people be right while leaving everyone else to be wrong. Jesus did not come to create another exclusive religion (based on beliefs)." - Brian McLaren, A Generous Orthodoxy, p.120.

"Emergent doesn't have a position on absolute truth, or on anything for that matter." - Tony Jones, at the 2005 National Youth Workers Convention.

"(This is) part of the problem with continually insisting that one of the absolutes of the Christian faith must be a belief that "Scripture alone" is our guide. It sounds nice, but it is not true... When people say that all we need is the Bible, it is simply not true." - Rob Bell, Velvet Elvis,

It is serious enough that some Emergents like Rob Bell (whose "Nooma" DVD series has sold over a million units) don't believe the Bible contains the whole truth. But many teachers, such as Emergent author and activist Brian McLaren, simply twist the Scriptures to say what they wish the Scriptures said, regardless of context, history or any understanding of the original languages.

CHRISTIANITY REDEFINED -

In February of this year (2008) I attended McLaren's

"Everything Must Change" conference tour stop in Nampa (Boise), Idaho. Attending the three-day event with me was my friend, Pastor Chris Bayer, who also wanted to hear what the godfather of the Emergent movement believed.

Though tough to take emotionally and spiritually, we stuck it out for the entire conference. It was at times grueling and at times frightening.

Space here permits me only a few comments, so I want to focus on the Friday evening session. Pastor Chris has written a stellar account of the entire McLaren conference that is posted at www.ericbarger.com.

The session began with original songs that, frankly, any Wiccan priest could sing. They were dark and gloomy and focused on how mankind has raped and destroyed the planet. The glory or greatness of God was non-existent during the "worship."

Next, we were subjected to a film produced by The Sierra Club, which focused on how mankind was raping Mother Earth through coal mining.

When McLaren took the platform, he began to unfold the real core of what he means by the book (and tour) title, "Everything Must Change." That is, "EVERYTHING...MUST...CHANGE" - including what Jesus meant by the very term "Kingdom of God" in the Gospel accounts.

According to McLaren, "The Kingdom of God" is all about our saving the planet. I thought, "of all the things this guy is, he's a Kingdom Now preterist, too!"

McLaren also informed us that "salvation" is actually *us saving the planet* and, when Jesus used the phrase "the world," He was referring to the Earth and not the lost souls living on it! I was more stunned with each passing moment.

The "service" ended with McLaren's invitation for attendees to come to the front and, among other exercises, take some water from a vat and re-baptize ourselves into the new enlightenment we'd received. He recommended that while we were there we also stick our hands into the tub of dirt that had been provided to fully sense "what needed to be saved"! No joke, folks. I was there. All this from one of Time Magazine's twenty-five most influential "Evangelicals."

A most disturbing aspect to Pastor Chris and me was that McLaren's event was held at and partially sponsored by Northwest Nazarene University - a fact that has made at least one former State Elder in the Nazarene Church weep in my presence! Thank God for the many Nazarenes who still hold to the Bible. But from what I saw in the panel discussions, which included several of the professors at NNU, there needs to be a radical housecleaning if Nazarenes expect the next generation of pastors and leaders to present true, biblical Christianity. (McLaren even declared during the conference that John Wesley was an Emergent! It was all I could do to contain myself.)

TRULY NOTHING NEW -

If the Emergent line of reasoning sounds familiar to you, it should. Nearly 100 years ago, maverick-turned-heretic Rudolf

Bultmann set out to "demythologize" the Bible, starting with the abandonment of such central and essential doctrines as the Virgin Birth and the bodily Resurrection. Liberal Baptist leader, Harry Emerson Fosdick, preached his now famous sermon, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" and declared, "Of course I do not believe in the virgin birth or in that old-fashioned substitutionary doctrine of the atonement, and I know of no intelligent person who does."

Of course, for Satan it wasn't enough that decades ago heretical teaching on par with Bultmann and Fosdick slowly infected the once-sound seminaries, pulpits and, finally, entire denominations. We shouldn't be at all shocked that the devil's 21st century target would again be some in leadership who are known as "evangelicals." Consider the rise of the feel-good gospels and scriptural compromising of Bill Hybels, Rick Warren and Joel Osteen that I and others have documented. The predicted apostasy is indeed in full swing - right under our noses.

Now, with kudos from Warren and others, Emergents have gone a step further than their questionable and more famous "Evangelical" brethren. Emergents are now openly adopting cultic, "New Age" and Universalistic ideas in place of or along side of the teachings of Jesus and the New Testament. In fact, Warren sure sounds more and more like an Emergent himself!



On January 27, 2008, Rick Warren stated, *"I think we need a second Reformation in the church about how we behave. The first Reformation was about creeds. I think the second*

Reformation needs to be about deeds..." That day he even told Dean Samuel Lloyd of Washington's National Cathedral that *"the future of the world is not secularism, it's religious pluralism."* It is statements such as these that have garnered Warren such warm acceptance among Emergents.

My question is, since Warren is easily one of the most influential persons on Planet Earth today claiming to be a Christian, why didn't he declare that the future of this world is 100% dependant on Jesus and Jesus alone?!!

Further illustrating this dissatisfaction with biblical Christianity, as well as a fascination with mysticism, is a statement from the wildly popular Emergent pastor from Michigan, Rob Bell, who stated, *"This is not just the same old message with new methods. We're rediscovering Christianity as an Eastern religion, as a way of life."* (Christianity Today, November, 2004, pp.36-41).

EMERGING = THE NEW LIBERALISM -

The debate over modern liberalism, be it called "Emerging," "Emergent" or whatever, boils down to the absolute authority of Scripture. As a former Emergent pastor who has now shunned the movement points out, the foremost error of the Emerging

Movement is that it has reduced Christianity to a CONVERSATION. This is EXACTLY what Lucifer pulled off with Eve in the Garden - i.e., "Hath God said...?" (Genesis 3).

I have contended for years that if the followers of Joseph Smith had been astutely reading their Bibles in 1830, there wouldn't be 13 million Mormons in the world today and millions more would never have perished because of Smith's false teachings. The same is true of those who sat in the pews in the early 20th century as doctrines of devils infiltrated the seminaries and pulpits of previously-sound Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Lutheran churches, to name a few.

It is tragic that millions had to be deceived by the Watchtower's conniving, Smith's tango with Satan and Bultmann's dive from orthodoxy. We need to learn from so many instances of regretful, timid wait-and-see hesitancy that church leaders have engaged in when it comes to swiftly quashing cultic doctrine. Why is it that retrospect seems to be the sad teacher when identifying cultists in our midst? In trying to be civil, gentle and loving with those espousing error, what really happens is that less-aware souls are trapped, deceived and convinced to go along for what amounts to a demonic joyride down the path to eternal destruction. I say, "Enough!" Where are the pastors and leaders who are not afraid to deal with error and false teaching in our midst? Paul would have opposed heretics, and instead of viewing it as somehow unkind, we must see it as the MOST loving thing to do.

Emergent liberals need to be confronted. These folks are heretics, yet they view their ideas as theologically deep and intellectually superior. In reality, no amount of condescending or attempting to spin true Bible believers into archaic Neanderthals can lessen or justify the depth of their error. For their own sakes and for that of their followers, we must recognize it as our task to identify Emergents as cultists, no matter who thinks we are radical, judgmental, or rude. After all, caring enough to warn the lost is the loving and biblical thing to do.

WARNINGS TO THE WAYWARD CHURCH -

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which 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 that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8-9).

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4).

Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was" (II Timothy 3:8-9). ■

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Mary Byars
 Cradle Roll 2: Larry Byars
 6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Rebekah White
 Cradle Roll 2: Nathaniel White
 Wed. Eve. Service ----- Volunteers Needed!!!

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of August 1, 2010

Sunday School ----- 19
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 35
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 27
 Wed. Eve. Service, 08/04/10 (cancelled due to A/C failure) ----- 23

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of August 1, 2010

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,092.00
 Insurance Fund ----- \$ 44.00
Total Received for Week of 08/01/10: \$ 1,136.00

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

INSURANCE FUND REPORT -

Monthly Requirement ----- \$ 273.08
 Amount Received This Month ----- \$ 0.00
Amount Still Needed By The End Of This Month: \$ 273.08

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. *Admit that you are a sinner.*
2. *Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.*
3. *Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.*
4. *You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).*
5. *By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.*

Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!



As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today** - **OK?** Thank you.

AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH -

Sunday, August 1, 2010

Mrs. Bessie Taylor ----- by Statement



The Neglected Remedy