
THE NEW EVANGELICALISM

HOW DID NEW EVANGELICALISM BEGIN? First of all, we must consider that word “New”. If there is a “New” there must have been an “Old”. The “Old Evangelicalism” was really Fundamentalism. The early New Evangelicals had all been Fundamentalists. But they were tired of being looked down on by Liberals and other so called intellectuals. They wanted to be looked up to, to be respected in the areas of education. We must ask, what was wrong with the Old”? Well, nothing was wrong with it, for it was simply belief in the Word of God regardless of what the world thought. New is not necessarily good. In fact, when it comes to the Bible and true Christianity, the old adage, “If it’s new, it’s not true and if it’s true, it’s not new” is most appropriate. New Evangelicalism is a distortion of the truth—a perverted Christianity.

New Evangelicalism was truly the brain-child of Dr. Harold John Ockenga: long-time pastor of Park Street Church, Boston; first President of Fuller Seminary; President of Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. In the early 1940’s he called the leaders of Evangelicalism together to consider a new direction for Bible-believers. It was not long before the National Association of Evangelicals was formed and he was the first President. In 1948, at a convocation at Fuller Seminary, he first used the term “New Evangelicalism”. In a 1957 news release, he reminded the world of this and boasted of the progress that was being made as evidenced in the formation of the NAE, the World Evangelical Fellowship, Fuller Seminary, Christianity Today, and the emergence of evangelist Billy Graham. Sad to say, this compromise Christianity has swept through most of the Evangelical camp. However, its acceptance by many is no proof of its orthodoxy.

WHAT IS NEW EVANGELICALISM? That is not so easily answered because of the wide range of beliefs and practices of the adherents. One thing is certain, IT IS NOT BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY! Because of the limited space here, I will only discuss five areas where this philosophy has departed from the truth of God’s Word and from the historical position of true Bible-believers, the real Fundamentalists.

1. REDEFINING SCRIPTURE. The true Bible-believer believes II Timothy 3:16: “ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, AND IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.” We happen to believe that the word of God (King James Version) is the inspired Word of God and without error. We believe God; He said, “THE WORDS OF THE LORD ARE PURE WORDS...THOU SHALT KEEP THEM, O LORD, THOU SHALT PRESERVE THEM FROM THIS GENERATION FOR EVER.” (Psalm 12:6-7). “THE GRASS WITHERETH, THE FLOWER FADETH: BUT THE WORD OF OUR GOD SHALL STAND FOR EVER.” (Isaiah 40:8). But this is not what the New Evangelicals believe. As early as 1956, Dr. Wilbur Smith said, “I believe that most conservative theologians today agree that the whole subject of inspiration needs reinvestigation.” While New Evangelicals talk about inspiration and inerrancy, they do not believe in a Bible without error. Richard Quebedeaux, in The Young Evangelicals, says

New Evangelicals believe in historical criticism (and they do), which is the product of unbelief. He also says, ““They acknowledge that the Bible is the word of man as well as the Word of God.” In his book Battle for the Bible, Harold Lindsell writes about Fuller Seminary: “It used to profess belief in an inerrant Bible. It no longer does.” He says this was begun as far back as 1947. In fact, In fact, he states that Fuller’s son, while a faculty member at his father’s school, put in print that he did not believe the Bible to be free from all error. It is easy to see why New Evangelicalism has strayed so far from the truth—they tampered with the very foundation of God’s truth. One of the leading intellectuals in their camp, the late Dr. Francis Schaeffer (though he died a New Evangelical), lamented: “We must say with sadness that in an appreciable number of places that seminaries, institutions and individuals who are known as Evangelical (they dropped the “NEW” a long time ago) no longer hold to a full view of Scripture.” He went on to say that many held the Neo-Orthodox view which was held by Karl Barth. Barth taught that the Bible “contained the Word of God” but it was not the very Word of God. There is more, but space does not allow it.

2. THE INTELLECTUAL APPROACH DOMINATES. When you dissect the Bible according to human wisdom, all you have left is human wisdom. The Apostle Paul said that he had not come “...WITH ENTICING WORDS OF MEN’S WISDOM,” but the Evangelicals have. In 1957, Dr. Ockenga said, “The New Evangelical is willing to face the intellectual problems and meet them in the framework of modern learning.” One problem is creation. Russell Mixter of Wheaton College edited a book Evolution and Christian Thought in which he speaks about many Evangelical scholars accepting some form of evolution. I read an article years ago by two Gordon College professors who said that evolution is the best way to explain creation. They love to promote the works of unbelieving intellectuals such as: Wm. Barclay, who says he is a universalist (that is, all will eventually be saved); C. S. Lewis, who said the same thing and wrote many other heresies; Malcolm Muggeridge, who recently joined the Roman Catholic Church; Bonhoeffer, who believed practically no Biblical truth; etc. “Moody Monthly” printed a favorable review of a book by Dr. Robert F. Gundry, which promoted the higher critical view of the Gospels. This liberal viewpoint destroys any hint at true inspiration of Scripture. Wheaton, in addition to teaching evolution, ecumenism, and many other false doctrines, has long had a Roman Catholic priest on the faculty. The place is so far out of touch with any kind of Biblical stance that New Evangelical Frank Schaeffer said that Wheaton College should be put out of its misery. A Gordon-Conwell newsletter tells of its two professors who participated in a tribute to Karl Barth, which took place at the ultra-liberal Union Theological Seminary. Gordon-Conwell belongs to a Theological Institute that includes Boston College (Roman Catholic), Boston University (Methodist), Harvard Divinity (Unitarian), Holy Cross (Greek Orthodox), and others. Well, you get the idea; I must move on to other areas.

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3. SEPARATION IS NON-EXISTENT. Though the Scriptures are very clear that we are not to be yoked together with unbelievers (II Cor. 6:14-17, Eph. 5:11, etc.), these people join with just about everyone. The last item above is indicative of the ecumenism. Dr. Ockenga long ago said, "The New Evangelical has changed his strategy from that of separation to one of infiltration." One thing is sure; he didn't get his strategy from the Word of God! Gordon College has had every sort of liberal speak on campus. The Gordon Players put on such worldly shows as "Hello, Dolly". They boast they are pro-denominational. Many New Evangelicals believe that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle and they have an organization called "Evangelicals Concerned" that promotes it. The feminist movement is also well represented. "Moody Monthly" printed an article on the subject by Patricia Gundry, the wife of a Moody Theology professor. Fuller Seminary sponsored a conference jointly with the Evangelical Women's Caucus. Two of the speakers, Virginia Mollenkot and Letha Scanzoni, have defended homosexuality as an acceptable Christian lifestyle. There seems to be no limit to the ecclesiastical cooperation. Richard Quebedeaux says in The Young Evangelicals, "...the New Evangelicalism has reopened dialogue with mainstream Ecumenicalism...and even Marxism." The same author in Worldly Evangelicals states: "Clearly and undisputedly, the evangelical left is far closer to Bonhoeffer, Brunner, and Barth than to Hodges and Warfield on the inspiration and authority of Scripture." When it comes to separation from the world, there is none. Quebedeaux says in his first mentioned book, "The Young Evangelicals insist that many forms of cultural participation may indeed be legitimate for Christians—e.g., moderate drinking, card playing, social dancing, listening to rock music, and attendance at the theater...they feel that such activities can be understood as God's for the use (not misuse) of His children..." He quotes everybody from Pope John XXIII to Martin Luther King, Jr. It is easy to see that New Evangelicalism does not even resemble Bible Christianity nor the traditional stand of Bible-believers down through the ages.

4. THE FOLLY OF ECUMENICAL EVANGELISM. The idea that a professed Bible-believer can join hands with Roman Catholics, liberal Protestants and others is beyond my comprehension. No matter how one may pretend these folks are saved, it is simply not so. Roman Catholicism is as far from the truth of God's word as one can get. The liberals are no better. Of course, the epitome of ecumenical evangelism is Billy Graham. In 1948, Graham said, "The three greatest enemies of the Gospel are Communism, Roman Catholicism, and Mohommedism." In 1951, when he was President of Northwestern Schools and an ad for a liberal book appeared in the School paper, he wrote, "We do not condone nor have fellowship with any form of liberalism." Dr. Graham has done a 180-degree turn about. He has long had unbelieving liberals

in his crusades and their churches get most of the "convert" cards. The World Council of Churches, which he once said was going to appoint the antichrist, he now lauds and supports. He has received degrees from catholic universities and has brought priests into his crusades. He now uses Roman Catholics as counselors. He has for years sent Roman Catholics who come forward back to their own churches. After a recent crusade, a Catholic priest who participated said one Roman Catholic Church received at least 500 "converts". In Orlando a couple of years ago, his organization put out separate follow-up material that was especially designed for Catholics. Add to all of this some of his ridiculous statements on Communism, Hell, and other subjects and one wonders just where he is coming from and where he is going. It seems more than strange to me that any true servant of God could help build up the system of antichrist, how he could call the Pope an evangelist for Christ. While a few may be saved in all of this (though I have my doubts), millions are being damned by this awful compromise and confusion. "GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF CONFUSION." He also says, "COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM, AND BE YE SEPARATE." Do you want to be popular or right?

5. MUCH, MUCH MORE. One could write a book on the subject (in fact, we have a 54 page one). There is deep involvement of the Charismatic movement in all of this with its emphasis on feeling rather than Scripture. They promote the books of C. S. Lewis, Bonhoeffer, Barclay, and even those of Roman Catholics. A Fuller Seminary paper gave a favorable review of Situation Ethics, which allows for all sorts of immorality. Many of them conduct memorial services for Dr. Martin Luther king, Jr. Rock music is perfectly all right..."Christian" (so-called) and otherwise. Many of their schools, which are supposedly training young people for the lord, have dances and other worldly practices. They talk about the inerrancy of scripture, but it is practically impossible to find one who believes there is an inspired Bible in existence today. They promote every phony bible that has ever been printed, including that abominable Living Bible. Space forbids any further consideration.

WHERE IS IT GOING? I have no doubt that it is going to Rome, as is all of apostate Christianity. A recent Charismatic convention in New Orleans, where many New Evangelicals were present, was dominated by Catholics. One of the leading professors at Gordon College recently converted to Catholicism. After all, if the pope is an evangelist for Christ, why not follow him? God help them!

Pastor Starr has written two booklets on this subject:

- 1 – The New Evangelicalism, the deadliest ism of all (\$1.50)
- 2 – The (New) Evangelical Experiment (\$3.00)

We will be happy to send you a copy of each for \$5.00 pp.

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