

The Emerging Church

Introducing Heresies

by Sandy Simpson, 4/20/09

*But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. **They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.***
(2 Pet. 2:1)

To understand the teachings of the Emerging Church or “Missional” movement you have to look at what the leadership of the movement promote. The false teachings of the Emerging Church are being done in secret, not necessarily hidden from view, by laying error alongside truth through the method of diaprax or brainwashing. They are also introducing destructive heresies into many churches and denominations today. I will present documented evidence that the leadership of the EC is teaching unbiblical and even heretical teachings that attempt to corrupt one or more of the core doctrines of the Church. Five of the most important doctrines of the Church that must not be corrupted are:

The Trinity: God is one "What" and three "Whos" with each "Who" possessing all the attributes of Deity and personality. Or alternately ... the one God eternally exists in three Persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Person of Jesus Christ: Jesus is 100% God and 100% man for all eternity.

The Second Coming: Jesus Christ is coming again bodily to earth to rule and judge.

Salvation: It is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

The Scripture: It is entirely inerrant and sufficient for all Christian life, and is a Christian's highest authority in all matters of faith and practice.

There are other Biblical teachings that must not be compromised, but the five above are paramount. Yet you will see just how far the EC is taking the churches away from orthodoxy.

THE TRINITY

*"This is as good a place as any to apologize for my use of masculine pronouns for God in the previous sentence. **You'll notice that wherever I can, I avoid the use of masculine pronouns for God because they can give the false impression to many people today that the Christian God is a male deity.**" (McLaren, Brian, A Generous Orthodoxy, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 74)*

I guess McLaren knows better than the Lord himself on how he needs to be addressed. Was God in his infinite wisdom and knowledge mistaken when using the masculine terms in reference to Himself? Of course not. If God, who inspired the Bible, refers to Himself

-- through the prophets and apostles -- in the masculine gender, then why shouldn't we? (http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality#footnote4_hl62011) Man was made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26), woman was made from man (Gen. 2:22). The proper relationship is this: man is the head over the woman as the Father is the head over the Son (1 Cor. 11:3). The same relationship of a husband being the head over his wife is exemplified in Christ being the head over His Church (Eph. 5:23). There is a correct order demonstrated in the character of the Triune God just as there should be in human relationships, all being put in correct perspective and in the love of God Who is love. This statement by McLaren is an example of political correctness taking the place of Biblical correctness.

"The masculine biblical imagery of 'Father' and 'son' also contributes to the patriarchalism or chauvinism that has too often characterized Christianity, maybe even more significantly than the pronoun problem." (McLaren, Brian, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 75)

Is political correctness the overarching filter through which scriptural revelation is examined? I guess we can't refer to God as "He" even though God refers to himself that way? Maybe McLaren knows what is best? I think not. (http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality#footnote4_hl62011) Another example of political correctness sacrificed to Biblically correct teaching. Jesus never referred to the Father as "the Mother", but always as the Father. If you believe that Jesus Christ is God then you have to believe Him when He talks about Himself (Mark 10:45), the Father (John 10:30) and the Holy Spirit (Heb. 10:15-16) as "He". If you cannot define God the way He defines Himself, then you are not teaching correctly on the nature of God, thereby denying the doctrine of the Trinity.

"...the value of understanding the Trinity is to love and honor and serve the Trinity, and that allegedly right Trinitarian opinions that do not lead to divine adoration are worth little." (McLaren, Brian, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 75)

Though I would agree with McLaren's sentiment here, an additional value of understanding the Trinity, however, is to be able to recognize and identify false theological systems and thereby prevent idolatry ... (http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality#footnote4_hl62011) Is it honoring to the Triunity of the Godhead to define God as not being a "He"?

JESUS CHRIST

The Lost Message Of Jesus, written by Steve Chalke (w/Alan Mann), is another example. Emergent leader, Brian McLaren's, endorsement of this book says, ***"Steve Chalke's new book could help save Jesus from Christianity."*** (http://www.apprising.org/archives/2006/08/enemies_of_the.html)

Jesus Christ is the reason for Christianity, which by definition is “followers of Christ”. This type of ridiculous statement is both an indictment of the Church and shows a lack of understanding of the bottom-line on Christianity. Jesus Christ need not be “saved from Christianity”. He is the only One who saves and He knows those who belong to Him (2 Tim. 2:19). He is the reason and the definition of “Christianity”.

*“... all who do not consciously and decisively accept Jesus as their personal savior will burn forever in hell.” ... “That phrase raises concerns for me, because based on the Scriptures, **I believe Jesus primarily came not to proclaim a way out of hell for some after death, but rather a way into a better life for all before death ...not to constrict but rather to expand the dimensions of who could be welcomed into the kingdom of God, of who could be accepted in the people of God. So my understanding of Jesus’ essential message tells me that ‘exclusivity of’ should generally precede ‘the Pharisees’ or ‘the judgmental’ or ‘the hypocrites,’ and never ‘Christ.’** (Brian McLaren, “A Reading of John 14:6,” [http://www.brianmclaren.net/emc/archives/McLaren %20-%20John%2014.6.pdf](http://www.brianmclaren.net/emc/archives/McLaren%20-%20John%2014.6.pdf))*

So, if there is no exclusivity of Christ, then does that mean that anyone who believes anything can be a part of the Kingdom of God? (<http://midwestoutreach.org/blogs/brian-mclaren-%E2%80%9Cis-jesus-the-only-way-to-what%E2%80%9D-part-1>) It is clear that is exactly what McLaren is teaching. The Bible nowhere states that those who do not believe in Jesus Christ will be saved. The Gentiles, without God and without hope in the world (Eph. 2:12), cannot be saved apart from the Gospel message being preached to them (Rom. 10:14).

***"Again, although I believe in Jesus as my personal savior, I am not a Christian for that reason. I am a Christian because I believe that Jesus is the Savior of the whole world."** (McLaren, Brian, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 100).*

Technically speaking, a person is a Christian precisely because he's trusting in Christ as his Savior. Whether or not he believes Jesus is the Savior of the whole world (non Christians included?) or not, is irrelevant to Christ being his Savior. (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-ignorance-bliss-theology>) If this statement is from McLaren’s heart, then one has to assume that he is not regenerate. The whole reason a person can become a child of God and part of the body of Christ is that they have believed unto salvation (Acts 16:31). There are further reasons to being a Christian but you cannot be one unless you have believed and accepted the Gospel message and repented of your sins first.

THE SCRIPTURE

God has already given to the church, in all its diversity, a complete Theory of Everything, a unifying principle that binds things together. The church's big TOE was formulated in the Bible's smallest encapsulation of What It All Means: John 1:14. The Fourth Gospel elaborates the exchange as it extends an invitation to the quest and quandary of the quantum explored in this book.

The Word [the depth dimension of Logos which physicists call energy, ancients called fire and theologians call metanoi] ...

became Flesh [the height dimension of Pathos which physicists call matter, ancients called land and theologians call koinonia]...

and dwelt among us [the breadth dimension of Ethos which physicists call space, ancients called wind and theologians call diakonia] ...

and we beheld his [God's] glory [the fourth dimension of Theos which physicists call space-time, ancients called sea and theologians call basileia].

This tetrad is the church's big TOE, the closest the Bible ever comes to formulating a simple, compact description of how the universe works (i.e., a Grand Unified Theory). John 1:14 presents four eddies of experiencing God, comprising a single stream. All four dimensions--the experience of God in Christ and self, the experience of God in community and creation, the experience of God in social justice and compassion, the experience of God in the transpersonal and transcendent--while distinct, are interacting states rather than chronological or sequential stages. They demonstrate a remarkable unity, interpenetrating and mutually reinforcing one another 10. . . as in life, so in the rather artificial partitions of this book.³⁸ (Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, pg. 9)

The Bible formulates lots of simple descriptions of how the universe works, if these guys would actually read it and study it. The fact that they apparently do not is demonstrated by their twisting of Scripture to fit some kind of New Age model. The Word is not energy, it is Jesus Christ, Who is God and Who was eternally Spirit (John 4:24) before He added humanity to His nature. The word for flesh has nothing to do with land. That Christ dwelt among us has nothing to do with *Pneuma*, which is translated as spirit or wind. God's glory is not the sea, it is His Son in human form, the very glory of God (2 Cor. 4:4). The fact that Sweet is trying to drag the definitions of pagan human cultures into this Bible verse shows that he is determined to prove that every culture and religion has a piece of the Truth. But there is no ultimate truth aside from the Word of God.

***"Scripture is something God had 'let be,' and so it is at once God's creation and the creation of the dozens of people and communities and cultures who produced it."* (Brian McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, p. 162)**

The Bible is not the creation of people, communities and cultures. It transcends culture because the men who wrote it were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21). The content of the Bible, though written in different time periods in different places, transcends culture and time and is alive and active in every culture and time period of history (Heb. 4:12). Yes the Bible was relevant to the cultures of the time periods it was written, but it is also just as relevant to us now. We do need to exegete the Bible properly in context, taking into account to whom it was written and the place and time it was

written, but the fact that the Word of God is still living and active is a testament to the fact that is truly is the Word of God.

*"Interestingly, when Scripture talks about itself, it doesn't use the language we often use in our explanation of its value. Premodern Western Christians, words like authority, inerrancy, infallibility, revelation, objective, absolute, and literal are crucial... **hardly anyone notices the irony of resorting to the authority of extra biblical words and concepts to justify one's belief in the Bible's ultimate authority.**" (McLaren, Brian, A Generous Orthodoxy, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 164.)*

What McLaren is failing to understand is that words are tools. We use words to identify concepts. The word Trinity is not found in the Bible but it is an accurate representation of the theology of God found therein. The word monotheism likewise is not found in the Bible but it accurately represents the singularity of God's existence. There's nothing wrong with using words not found in the Bible to describe concepts that the Bible teaches. (<http://midwestoutreach.org/blogs/brian-mclaren-%E2%80%9Cis-jesus-the-only-way-to-what%E2%80%9D-part-1>) The irony is that while McLaren makes this statement he is doing that same thing he warns against, and does so on a regular basis, using words that the Bible does not use, nor are they representations of actually Biblical teaching. I would rather have extra-Biblical words that describe a Biblical teaching than extra-Biblical words that describe nothing but McLaren's own hot air. This is why it is crucial for the churches not to listen to this man.

SALVATION & THE GOSPEL

***ALAN JONES (Author of Reimagining Christianity) "The Church's fixation on the death of Jesus as the universal saving act must end, and the place of the cross must be reimagined in Christian faith. Why? Because of the cult of suffering and the vindictive God behind it"** (Alan Jones, Reimagining Christianity, p. 132).*

The EC leadership has done a lot to "reimage Christianity" ... into another false religion. The fact that Jones and others in the EC view the Gospel message and the character of God in this way shows that they are not really a part of the true Church.

*"I am no longer interested, in the first instance, in what a person **believes**. Most of the time it's so much **clutter in the brain**.... I wouldn't trust an inch many people who profess a belief in God. Others who do not or who doubt have won my trust. I want to know if joy, curiosity struggle, and compassion bubble up in a person's life. I'm interested in being fully alive. There is **no objective authority**...." Alan Jones, Reimagining Christianity (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2005), pages 79, 83.)*

This is an attempt to destroy both the Gospel and the authority of Scripture. I have to wonder if this man has ever comes in contact with real Christians? If believing in Christ

for salvation is “clutter in the brain”, those who profess it untrustworthy, and if you don’t flow with every wind of doctrine you are not fully alive, then this is a different gospel. The Bible is objective authority whether Jones wants to accept that or not. Who is he to stand against the written Word of God?

*In the second foreword to Dan Kimball's book about the Emergent church Brian McLaren writes “**Our understandings of the gospel constantly change** as we engage in mission in our complex dynamic world, as we discover that the gospel has a rich kalaidoscope of meaning to offer, yielding unexplored layers of depth, revealing uncounted facets of insight and relevance. No doubt as we look back and see ways in which our modern understandings of the gospel were limited or flawed”*

If your understandings of the Gospel, which is quite simple, constantly change then that implies your belief system changes. If your belief in the Gospel changes, then your assurance of salvation becomes null and void.

*“I don't think we've got the gospel right yet. What does it mean to be 'saved'?... I don't think the liberals have it right. But I don't think we have it right either. None of us has arrived at orthodoxy.” (Brian McLaren, *The Emergent Mystique*, Christianity Today, 2004)*

Who said we have to “have the gospel right” in terms of changing it to fit the times? We are to simply preach it as passed down to us from Jesus Christ and the Apostles (2 Pet. 3:2, Eph. 2:20). We do not change the Gospel to fit the times. We share the truth of salvation in Jesus Christ and trust Him to save those He has foreknown and predestined. McLaren can speak for himself when he claims that “none of us has arrived at orthodoxy”. Anyone who has not arrived at orthodoxy is either not a believer or has apostatized (fallen away - 2 Thes. 2:3).

*“[T]his is one of the huge problems with the traditional understanding of hell, because if the Cross is in line with Jesus' teaching, then I won't say the only and I certainly won't say ... or even the primary or a primary meaning of the Cross ... is that the Kingdom of God doesn't come like the kingdoms of this world by inflicting violence and coercing people. But that the kingdom of God comes thru suffering and willing voluntary sacrifice right? But in an ironic way **the doctrine of hell** basically says no, that's not really true. At the end God get's his way thru coercion and violence and intimidation and uh domination just like every other kingdom does. The Cross isn't the center then, **the Cross** is almost a distraction and **false advertising for God.**” (Brian McLaren speaking, *From the Interview*, <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/brianmclaren.htm>)*

The doctrine of hell is not God’s coercion; it is man’s sin and the wages thereof (Rom. 6:23). The Cross is not a distraction because of the existence of Hell, it is the symbol of the way out of our destination without the sacrifice of Christ. God does not send people to hell. He sent His Son to rescue us from it, and if people do not choose to accept Him

as Lord and Savior they continue on their path, instituted by Adam and Eve, to destruction. The doctrine of hell is not “false advertising for God” but a fact that can only be avoided through repentance of sin and belief in Jesus Christ, which is the only way to the second birth.

*In the midst of the Purpose Driven craze and an apparently sleeping church, **Brian McLaren has endorsed a book that calls the doctrine of the Cross a vile doctrine.** (p. 168, Reimagining Christianity - Alan Jones)*

This book by Jones is blasphemous. That this is a manual for the Emerging Church should tell you something.

***McLaren:** Yeah. And I heard one well-known Christian leader, who—I won't mention his name, just to protect his reputation. Cause some people would use this against him. But I heard him say it like this: The traditional understanding says that God asks of us something that God is incapable of Himself. God asks us to forgive people. But **God is incapable of forgiving. God can't forgive unless He punishes somebody in place of the person He was going to forgive.** God doesn't say things to you—Forgive your wife, and then go kick the dog to vent your anger. God asks you to actually forgive And there's a certain sense that, a common understanding **of the atonement presents a God who is incapable of forgiving.** Unless He kicks somebody else. (Emergent Leader Brian McLaren Interviewed By Leif Hansen, transcript at <http://imablogger.net/2008/07/14/emergent-leader-brian-mclaren-interviewed-by-leif-hansen/>)*

God is not incapable of forgiving. God rejected His own Son only because He was perfect and paid the penalty of death we owed. McLaren forgets that God sent forgiveness through His Son “while we were yet sinners” (Rom. 5:8). That is the kind of forgiveness I am thankful for because God came looking for me through the Gospel and I am saved by the forgiveness available in the cross.

***McLaren:** Right. If I understand what you're saying. These are important subjects. I understand you're saying: **Look, we could look at Ghandi's life as an example of self sacrificial love** or Martin Luther King Junior's life. There would be a lot of people we could look at. And so wouldn't it be better to just talk about **Jesus as one among many, rather than lift Him up as some extraordinary example. Because by doing that we create, we perpetuate this Christian elitism and exclusivism, et cetera, et cetera.** Is that what you're saying? (Emergent Leader Brian McLaren Interviewed By Leif Hansen, transcript at <http://imablogger.net/2008/07/14/emergent-leader-brian-mclaren-interviewed-by-leif-hansen/>)*

Jesus is not one among many; He is the One (John 14:6, Acts 4:12)!

*In the clip from October 22, 2007, **Pagitt denied that there is a place of eternal conscious torment for persons who die apart from faith in Jesus Christ.** (Doug Pagitt, on "The Paul Edwards Program," WLQV Detroit, 10/22/07)*

The Bible and Jesus Christ are clear that those who do not believe and live in sin are destined for hell (Mt 5:22, 5:29, 5:30, 10:28, 16:18, 18:9, 23:15, 23:33, Mr 9:43, 9:45, 9:46, 9:47, Lu 12:5, 16:23, Jas 3:6, 2 Pet. 2:4) or the lake of fire (2 Pet. 3:7, Jude 1:7, Rev. 20:14-15 etc.) along with the AntiChrist, False Prophet, Satan and his angels. As to eternal torment, the Bible is also clear.

*Re 14:11 **And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.***

*Jude 1:7 In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. **They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.***

*Heb 6:2 instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and **eternal judgment.***

*Mt 25:46 **"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."***

*Mt 25:41 **"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.***

Pagitt has denied what Jesus Christ Himself said about the wages of sin.

*Interviewer: I think with all the other change going on, one thing we've got to hold firm on what is the Gospel. McLaren: **What do you mean when you say "the Gospel?"** Interviewer: You know, justification by grace through faith in the finished atoning work of Christ on the cross. McLaren: **Are you sure that's the Gospel?** Interviewer: Of course. Aren't you? McLaren: **I'm sure that's a facet of the Gospel, and it's the facet that modern evangelical Protestants have assumed is the whole Gospel, the heart of the Gospel. But what's the point of that Gospel?** (Brian McLaren, "Interview with Brian McLaren about 'A Letter to Friends of Emergent.')*

Glad the interviewer answered correctly. People like McLaren get Christians to question their belief in what the Bible teaches and thereby "destroy the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:18). If McLaren does not know that the point of the Gospel is personal salvation then he is not a Christian.

*"Perhaps our 'inward-turned, individual-salvation-oriented, un-adapted Christianity' is a colossal and tragic misunderstanding, and perhaps we need to listen again for the true song of salvation, which is 'good news to all creation.' **So perhaps it's best to suspend what, if anything, you 'know' about what it means to call Jesus 'Savior' and to give the matter of salvation some fresh attention. Let's start simply. In the Bible, save means 'rescue' or 'heal'. It emphatically***

does not mean 'save from hell' or 'give eternal life after death,' as many preachers seem to imply in sermon after sermon. Rather its meaning varies from passage to passage, but in general, in any context, save means 'get out of trouble.' The trouble could be sickness, war, political intrigue, oppression, poverty, imprisonment, or any kind of danger or evil." (McLaren, Brian, A Generous Orthodoxy, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 164.)

Contrary to McLaren, Christ Jesus proclaimed, "I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Luke 12:5). The Lord Himself summarized the Gospel when He said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). The contrast is stark; the one who personally believes on the Son has everlasting life. The one who denies personal salvation is not only under the wrath of God, which is surely the soul's death, but God's wrath abides on him. McLaren has formally denied the faith. He and his followers have fulfilled the Word spoken of Scripture, that they "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God (Rom. 10:3). (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality>)

*"But what about heaven and hell? You ask. Is everybody in? My reply: Why do you consider me qualified to make this pronouncement? Isn't this God's business? **Isn't it clear that I do not believe this is the right question for a national Christian to ask?"** (McLaren, Brian, A Generous Orthodoxy, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 112)*

No, McLaren is certainly not qualified to make such a pronouncement. But God is and God has told us that not everyone goes to heaven (Matt. 25:46; Mark 3:29). Surely, McLaren knows these verses. Why is that he does not reference them or others like them to answer the question he himself asks? Is everybody in heaven? The answer is no. Is everyone in hell? The answer likewise is no. (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality>)

*"McLaren: Tony [Campolo] and I might disagree on the details, but **I think we are both trying to find an alternative to both traditional Universalism and the narrow, exclusivist understanding of hell [that unless you explicitly accept and follow Jesus, you are excluded from eternal life with God and destined for hell].**" (Brian McLaren, http://blog.christianitytoday.com/outofur/archives/2006/05/brian_mclarens_1.html.)*

Universalism is an unbiblical and anti-Christian teaching that everyone will be saved. This is contrary to scripture and McLaren should know this from such verses as Matt. 25:46 and Mark 3:29). (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality>)

"Fourth, we should consider the possibility that many, and perhaps even all of Jesus' hell-fire or end-of-the-universe statements refer not to postmortem judgment but to the very historic consequences of rejecting his kingdom message of reconciliation and peacemaking. The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 67-70 seems to many people to fulfill much of what we have traditionally understood as hell." (Brian McLaren, http://blog.christianitytoday.com/outofur/archives/2006/05/brian_mclarens_2.html.)

How can we miss this? Jesus clearly taught post-mortem judgment. McLaren is way off base. Matt. 3:12 says, "And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Mark 9:43 says, "And if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire." Matt. 18:18 says, "And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the eternal fire." (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality>)

THE CHURCH & CHRISTIANITY

*"CHANGE OR BE CHANGED — In the old ecology of nature, change was seen as abnormal. In the new ecology of nature, change is life's natural, normative state.... What works today won't work tomorrow.... **The wonder is that churches are not in more disarray. ... They are standing pat, opting to uphold the status quo rather than undergo the upheaval.**" ... **"Postmodern culture is a change-or-be-changed world. The word is out: Reinvent yourself for the 21st century or die."** (Leonard Sweet, *Soul Tsunami: Sink or Swim in the New Millennium Culture* (Zondervan, 1999), p. 74-75)*

The Church does not need to reinvent itself. It is the Church, the body of Christ. This is another in a long line of examples of the use of diaprax to vilify the Church and believers. Sweet knows nothing of the mission of the Church that is ongoing. There may be problems in some churches and denominations, but the solutions offered by the EC are not the solutions the Church needs, and in fact the upheaval brought about by the ideas of the EC is evil.

***Yes, we (the Church) are going through a dying experience, but we do not go alone. ... What do we share in particular with them? We have lost our place. We share the loss of our traditions and institutions. We share the pressure to lose faith in God to those gods of the surrounding culture. ... There is clarity in overwhelming ambiguity.** (Alan Roxburgh, *Crossing The Bridge*, pg. 160)*

I agree with Roxburgh's emphasis on local churches as opposed to mega-church. The problem is that his ideas of restructuring of churches that involve mystical and New Age

ideas are mostly being accepted and taught to mega-churches. Local churches are more likely to continue as they have been in the continuing, not emerging, biblical agenda of the Church. Case in point: Roxburgh's "Forgotten Ways" is endorsed by Leonard Sweet and Brian McLaren, both proponents of New Age mysticism, Universalism, pantheism and other occult ideas in the churches.

*"Sit down here next to me in this little restaurant and ask me **if Christianity (my version of it, yours, the Pope's, whoever's) is orthodox, meaning true, and here's my honest answer: a little, but not yet.** Assuming by Christianity you mean the Christian understanding of the world and God, Christian opinions on soul, text, and culture... **I'd have to say that we probably have a couple of things right, but a lot of things wrong, and even more sprints before is unseen and unimagined.**" (McLaren, Brian, *A Generous Orthodoxy, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 296*)*

This is like saying you are a "little" pregnant. Which "couple of things" are correct about Christianity? Might they be the Trinity, the deity of Christ, that Jesus is the only way to salvation, the vicarious atonement of Christ, Jesus' physical resurrection, or justification by grace through faith? These essentials of the faith are true, not just a little true, and without these truths we don't have Christianity.

*"Perhaps our **'inward-turned, individual-salvation-oriented, un-adapted Christianity'** is a colossal and tragic misunderstanding, and perhaps we need to listen again for the true song of salvation, which is 'good news to all creation.' So perhaps it's best to suspend what, if anything, you 'know' about what it means to call Jesus 'Savior' and to give the matter of salvation some fresh attention. Let's start simply." (McLaren, Brian, *A Generous Orthodoxy, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 93*)*

Notice how McLaren constructs the statement. He uses negatives such as 'inward-turned, individual-salvation-oriented, un-adapted Christianity' to represent Christianity and then he attacks that representation. What he does is cause people to doubt what they already know about Christ and undermine historic Christianity in the process. I'm reminded of what Satan said to Eve, "Has God said...?" The first thing he did was get Eve to doubt the word of God. Error followed. I get the impression from McLaren that he wants to disassociate himself from the historical Church and from the absolutes of Christian truth that have been revealed and codified throughout the church's history. Of course, we don't want to be so stuck in ancient tradition and creeds that we become useless and even anti-gospel, but there is a heritage and there are truths that we must stick to. McLaren needs to emphasize that. (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality>) But McLaren cannot emphasize something he is not interested in, nor understands. The fact that he is using this dialectical strawman argument to put down the Church by saying it is spreading "un-adapted Christianity" shows just how ignorant he is of missiology and cross-cultural presentations of the Gospel through the ages. If he would actually read some biographical materials on mission work, for instance, he would not be using this

diaprax to vilify the old to bring in the “new”. The “good news to all creation” does not include molding our faith to look like other religions, or claiming our God is the same as the gods they are worshipping, which he also promotes.

Erwin McManus, another emergent leader and pastor of Mosaic Church in Los Angeles, CA, says it is his goal to “destroy Christianity as a world religion and be a recatalyst for the movement of Jesus Christ.” Erwin McManus, (http://www.christianexaminer.com/Articles/Articles%20Mar05/Art_Mar05_09.html)

McManus is another diaprax teacher who not only wants to vilify Christianity but actually destroy it. There is true religion and false religion. Biblical Christianity is true religion, whether McManus likes that word or not. You don’t destroy the old to call it something else because then you have a new false religion instead of the foundation upon which Christianity is laid.

James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

How can getting away from “religion” be a good thing when James says it is something we need to practice? How can we practice true religion if we follow men like McManus who are leading us into the destruction of Christianity? Is that not being polluted by the world? What McManus is proposing is another “world religion” that is not based on Christianity but based on Kingdom Now principles. But though true religion is that which takes care of widows and orphans it is not one that claims it can save the planet or one that synthesizes and synchronizes all the world’s religions into one big false religion. What McManus is actually proposing would pollute Christianity with the world. Why would calling Christianity a “movement” instead of a “religion” matter except that McManus wants to be politically correct instead of Biblically accurate.

James 1:26 If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

MYSTICISM

There be Treasures #10. (1) Unitary thinking, the highest level of understanding reality, opens us up to a wider sensory realm and mystical dimension of the divine; it also heals the divisions that separate us from one another and life’s highest values. 2. Wholeness unites, not eliminates, opposites, bringing them into dynamic balance—the coming together of earth and water, air and fire, through the merger of the Antaeus sensibility (Antaeus the hugger of the ground, from which came his strength) with the Herculean sensibility (Hercules the master of air and fire, who defeated Antaeus by lifting him off the ground.) 70 3. The discovery of the euphoric state of wholeness will prove to be the highest form of ecstasis. (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, pg. 250)

Unitary thinking is a mainstay of eastern mystical religion. It contends that we are all one and if we could just realize that then it would bring peace and heal division. But this is not what the Bible teaches we should be pursuing, first because it is not true (we are NOT all God) and second because the Gospel actually brings division between those who refuse to believe and those who are born again.

*Luke 12:50-52 But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! **Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.** From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three.*

We cannot achieve peace by becoming one with every human being. Peace can only be received because a person is born again and has put his trust in Jesus Christ.

*John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; **my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.** Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

Notice that Sweet moves on to invoking the four elements as do occultists. He also gives credence to Greek mythology. Then he finishes by stating that we can attain this “wholeness” by thinking we will have the “highest form of ecstasis”. Would not the highest form of “ecstasis” be when we are in the new heaven and earth with Jesus Christ by virtue of the fact that we have believed the Gospel message? If we spend our time in some form of artificial ecstasis here will we not be avoiding our mission to spread the Gospel to the world? The point of the Gospel is not to bring us to ecstasis now but to give us a life, and that more abundantly.

*John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: **I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.** (KJV)*

*Leonard Sweet in his book Soul Tsunami: Sink or Swim in New Millennium Culture says: “**Postmoderns want a God they can feel, taste, touch, hear and smell—a full sensory immersion in the divine.**”*

This is ridiculous. Postmoderns want to “taste” God? How would one do that? In fact how would one do any of these things since God is invisible (1 Tim. 1:17)? Jesus Christ is not here to touch and smell because He is seated at the right hand of the Father (Rom. 8:34). If a Christian wants to hear God they must read their Bibles and ask the Holy Spirit to open their understanding to it. So if Postmoderns are expecting that kind of experience of God they will be sadly disappointed. If, on the other hand, they will place their faith in Him without sight and feel and touch (*We live by faith, not by sight.* - 2 Cor. 5:7) they might experience what it is like to have His Holy Spirit indwell them and empower them to serve Him.

*“In the words of one of the greatest theologians of the twentieth century, Jesuit philosopher of religion/dogmatist Karl Rahner, **“The Christian of tomorrow will be a mystic, one who has experienced something, or he will be nothing”**(Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, p.76)*

We are in tomorrow now. The Latter Rain and EC have turned many people who profess to be Christians into mystics. But what they experience are soulical things, not the things of the Spirit. Those who do not have a true relationship to the Holy Spirit would also not know Jesus Christ if He appeared to them bodily, which He will not do till His second coming. They have been taught that their emotions are a spiritual experience, when they are fleshly and soulical.

***“Mysticism begins in experience; it ends in theology”**(Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, p.76).*

Backwards. Experience before doctrine leads to false experience, never to sound doctrine.

EXPERIENCE

*“This is why, for starters, I’m a Christian: the image of God conveyed by Jesus as the son of God, and the image of the universe that resonates with his image of God best fit my deepest experience, best resonate with my deepest intuition, best inspire my deepest hope, and best challenge me to live with what my friend, the late Mike Yaconelli, called **‘dangerous wonder,’ which is the starting point for a generous orthodoxy.**” (McLaren, Brian, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, p. 77)*

Here we have a great example of the error of putting experience over Scripture. The reason anyone is a Christian is because of God's calling (Rom. 8:30), because God has chosen him or her for salvation (2 Thess. 2:13), and because God has granted that they believe (Phil. 1:29). It is not because of the person's experience, intuition, or hope. McLaren appears to elevate experience over scriptural revelation, at least in this instance. (http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality#footnote4_hl62011) The fact is that it is not only in this instance that McLaren elevates experience over doctrine. That is what the Contemplative movement that is the EC is all about.

UNIVERSALISM

Spirituality refers first of all to the universal gift of aliveness that exists within all religions and outside of religions. It breathes out the air that “inspires.” Those who have been in-spired with aliveness by the kiss of God will “con-spire” to kiss others into coming alive to the spiritual dimensions of existence. “In-spire” means to breathe in. “Con-spire” means to breathe together. “Conspiracy” enters by the same door as “spirituality.” A world gagging on

*smog and smut needs a breath of fresh air. The New Light movement begins as a fresh air conspiracy of “aliveness.” But it is more than that. Spiritual consciousness can be something greater than aesthetics or aliveness. **The Bible tells us that the human species has been twice kissed by the divine.** (Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, pg. 253)*

All this kissing God business will not help anyone. The breath of fresh air needed by the world is the Gospel, while they run full tilt toward judgment. The only people “twice kissed by the divine”, if that is what is called being born again in the Bible, are those who place their faith in Christ. The human species is destined for judgment.

*Rom 3:23 for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God,
Heb 9:27 ... man is destined to die once, and **after that to face judgment**,
Joh 3:7 You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘**You must be born again.**’*

I don’t see any way that Sweet understands the Gospel at all. What he teaches sounds exactly like New Age Universalism.

*“**Universalism is not as bankrupt of biblical support as some suggest,**” (Brian McLaren, *The Last Word and the Word After That*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), pp. 103 (cf. pp. 182-183)*

No it is more so!

*Joh 14:6 Jesus answered, “**I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.**”*

***But without question McLaren does hold to the doctrine of inclusivism which teaches that while salvation has been made possible by Jesus Christ, it is not necessary to know who Jesus is or the precise nature of what He has done.** (Brian McLaren, *The Last Word and the Word After That*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), pp. 103 (cf. pp. 182-183)*

This is a lie of the devil, not saying McLaren is the devil, but it is a clearly a doctrine of demons.

*1Co 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God **the world through its wisdom did not know him**, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.*

*1Jo 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! **The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.***

1Jo 5:20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

*"In these biblical narratives **God is constantly present in places where no one would logically expect God's future to emerge and yet it does over and over.** There is nothing in these stories about getting the wrong people off the bus and the right people on to accomplish great ends and become the best organization in the world. This God who calls us is always calling the wrong people onto a bus that isn't expected to arrive."* (Missional Leader, A. Roxburgh, Pg 18, <http://www.backyardmissionary.com/>)

God only "emerges" where the Gospel is preached (Rom. 10:14-15). Otherwise no one can know God (1 Jn 3:1, Gal. 4:8, 1 Cor. 1:24, Eph. 2:12) or have a relationship to Him.

INTERFAITHISM

*A surprisingly central feature of all the world's religions is the language of light in communicating the divine and symbolizing the union of the human with the divine: Muhammed's light-filled cave, Moses' burning bush, Paul's blinding light, Fox's "inner light," Krishna's Lord of Light, Böhme's light-filled cobbler shop, Plotinus' fire experiences, Bodhisattvas with the flow of Kundalini's fire erupting from their fontanelles, and so on.⁵³ Light is the common thread that ties together near-death experiences as they occur in various cultures. (Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, pg. 146)*

Sweet tries to level the playing field between Moses and other false religion leaders. There is no similarity between "the angel of the Lord" (Ex. 3:2), the preexistent Jesus Christ (Ex. 3:14), speaking to Moses from the burning bush, and the "light" experiences of Muhammed, Krishna and other false religious leaders. The light of false religion comes from "an angel of light", the devil (2 Cor. 11:14).

*"Fourth, New Light embodiment means to be 'in connection' and 'information' with other faiths. To be in-formation means to know each other's songs almost as well as one knows them oneself, and to enlarge the community to include those whose conceptions of God differ from ours in form. To be in connection means to be able to sing, not only selected stanzas, but all the verses" ... "One can be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ without denying the flickers of the sacred in followers of Yahweh, or Kali, or Krishna. A globalization of evangelism 'in connection' with others, and a globally 'in-formed' gospel, is capable of talking across the fence with Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Muslim--people from other so called 'new' religious traditions ('new' only to us)--without assumption of superiority and power." (Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, p. 129-130)*

There are no "flickers of the sacred" in false religion. If a man can only be sanctified, set apart for sacred use, by the truth of God's written Word (John 17:17), then it is impossible to be made sacred without it. The false Scriptures, false prophets and false gods of other religions cannot make you sacred. If Christianity's witness to the world is "without superiority and power" then it is without use.

2Ti 1:7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, **but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.**

Ac 4:12 **Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."**

Get away from people who claim that other religions are a form of godliness. When they make this claim they are denying the power of the Gospel.

2 Tim. 3:1-5 **But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.**

"1. Get in touch with your lungs by closing your eyes. Visualize in your mind a tennis court" 8. **"Hold your Bible and breathe meditatively. The breathtaking, nay, breathgiving truth of aliveness is more than Methuselean in its span: Part of your body right now was once actually, literally part of the body of Abraham, Sarah, Noah, Esther, David, Abigail, Moses, Ruth, Matthew, Mary, Luke, Martha, John, Priscilla, Paul... and Jesus. 9. Keep breathing quietly while holding your Bible. You have within you not just the powers of goodness resident in the great spiritual leaders like Moses, Jesus, Muhammed, Lao Tzu. You also have within you the forces of evil and destruction." Resident in each breath you take is the body of angels like Joan of Arc and devils like Gilles de Rais, Genghis Khan, Judas Iscariot, Herod, Hitler, Stalin and all the other destructive spirits throughout history"** (Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, p.300-301)

How can the "powers of goodness" be in Muhammed and Lao Tzu when they were not a believers? Muhammed worshipped a false god called Allah who has no son. It is only by God's power in the born again believer that anyone can do good (2 Thes. 1:11), that is the will of God. You cannot do the will of God if you are no regenerate. Evil is not resident in the air, it is resident in every human being's body, soul and spirit until they are covered by the blood of Christ and indwelt by His spirit because they have believed the Gospel (Gen. 6:5, Matt. 15:19, Jer. 17:9). The assertion of Sweet that our bodies are "literally part of the body of" Biblical characters is New Age pantheism.

BRIAN MCLAREN (Emerging Church leader): "Jesus seems to say, 'The kingdom of God doesn't need to wait until something else happens. No, it is available and among you now.... Invite people of all nations, races, classes, and religions to participate in this network of dynamic, interactive relationships with God and all God's creation!" ... the kingdom of God will be radically, scandalously inclusive. As we've seen, Jesus enjoys table fellowship with prostitutes and drunks.... He affirms and responds to the faith of Gentiles—Romans and Syrophonecians and Samaritans." (Brian McLaren, *The Secret*

Message of Jesus: Uncovering the Truth that could change everything (Nashville: Thomas Nelson's W Publishing Group, 1006), page 74 & 94.)

The “kingdom of God” is not inclusive of all “religions”. It is only inclusive of people who come into that Kingdom by virtue of having come into Christ by faith. This is a good example of laying error alongside truth. We are to invite all people to faith in Christ, but we cannot invite false religions to be a part of the Kingdom of God, which is now being established in the hearts of those who come to faith in Jesus Christ. When they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ they must abandon their false religions and false gods.

"It may be advisable in many (not all!) circumstances to help people become followers of Jesus and remain within their Buddhist, Hindu, or Jewish contexts," ... "Is our religion the only one that understands the true meaning of life? Or does God place his truth in others too? ... The gospel is not our gospel, but the gospel of the kingdom of God, and what belongs to the kingdom of God cannot be hijacked by Christianity" (p. 194). (Brian McLaren, An Emergent Manifesto, Baker Books, referenced http://simplyagape.blogspot.com/2007_06_01_archive.html)

The answer to McLaren’s question “Is our religion the only one that understands the true meaning of life?” is an emphatic “yes”. There is no truth of salvation in any other religion other than Christianity. The Gospel is our Gospel alone. There is no other Gospel in any other religion. There is no other way to be reconciled to God. Christianity has not “hijacked” the kingdom of God. Christianity spreads the Kingdom of God because they are the only ones who understand it and have received it personally. You cannot remain in a false religion and be part of the Kingdom of God which is being established in believers of Jesus Christ. False religions are part of the fleeting kingdom of the one who has temporary dominion over the earth at this time (Col. 1:13, John 16:11, Eph. 2:2), that is Satan. Remember that false religions and those who follow them do not know God (1 Cor. 1:21, 1 John 3:1, Gal. 4:8, Eph. 2:12)

“The Christian faith, I am proposing, should become (in the name of Jesus Christ) a welcome friend to other religions of the world, not a threat” (Brian McLaren, A Generous Orthodoxy McLaren, p.254)

The Gospel is always a threat to those who refuse to acknowledge that they are sinners. But Christians do not threaten those they witness to. They lay out the Truth of the Gospel instead of becoming friends with false religion. We don’t compromise the truth of the Gospel by sacrificing it the half truths and lies of false religion. You cannot be a “welcome friend” to false religions if you are making exclusive claims about the Truth, and especially about Jesus Christ Who made exclusive claims about Himself.

"I must add, though, that I don't believe making disciples must equal making adherents to the Christian religion. It may be advisable in many circumstances to help people become followers of Jesus and remain within their Buddhist,

Hindu, or Jewish contexts."

---Brian McLaren, A Generous Orthodoxy, p. 260

You cannot remain in false religion and be a follower of Christ. We are under a curse if we forsake God to follow false gods (De. 28:20). Even the Jews, in order to be saved, must come under the new covenant through faith in Jesus Christ (Jer. 31:31, Heb. 9:15). This idea of working alongside false religions in this alleged “kingdom building” is demonstrated by the leadership of the EC including Alan Jones. *(In) Alan Jones' new book, Reimagining Christianity (he shows himself to be) ... an interspiritualist and mystic. Take a look at the Living Spiritual Teachers Project, of which Jones is involved. This group of about twenty-five includes Zen and Buddhist monks, New Agers and even Marianne Williamson and her Course in Miracles.* (<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/brianmclaren.htm>)

*Christianity, Islam, and Judaism have more in common than many people realize because they all share a primal narrative, and they all flow from a common sacred fountainhead: a single figure, at once famous and mysterious, a Middle Eastern man named Abraham of Ur. ... We can date Abraham's birth to about 2000 BC, in modern-day Iraq, near present-day Nasarif. Like Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad—and like us—Abraham was raised in a pluralistic, polytheistic world. During his lifetime, he lived side by side with others who honored many different gods and practiced many different religions. ... And during his lifetime, Abraham—like Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad—had an encounter with God that distinguished him from his contemporaries and propelled him into a mission, introducing a new way of life that changed the world... How appropriate that the **three Abrahamic religions** begin with a journey into the unknown. (McLaren, Finding Our Way Again, pgs. 22, 23, emphasis mine)*

Muhammed did not have “an encounter with God”. He had an encounter with the enemy. Allah is really one of the Baal's. Muhammed's encounter did propel him into a mission, but that mission was one of writing a false scripture, of following a false demonic god, and of being a false prophet. Christianity has nothing in common with the false god Allah of Islam. Allah is another false god in a long line of false gods. Islam is not an “Abrahamic religion”. It is a religion of one of Abraham's descendants but it would be nothing sanctioned by or started by Abraham.

POSTMODERNISM

*As a cosmion incarnating the cells of a new body, New Lights will function as transitional vessels through **which transforming energy can renew the divine image in the world**, moving postmoderns from one state of embodiment to another. (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, pg. 38)*

This is New Age. We are not here to “renew the divine image in the world”. We are not here to save the planet. Jesus Christ will do that upon His second coming. We are to preach the Gospel and disciple those who believe. There is no “transforming energy” we

possess. What we have to share is empowered by the Holy Spirit but we are not transferring any kind of “energy” in doing so. That is an eastern mystical concept. These ideas do reflect the postmodern paradigm, which has been inculcated with the New Age.

Postmodern culture is hungry for the intimacy of psychospiritual transformations. It wants a “reenchantment of nature.” It’s aware of its ecstasy deprivation. It wants to know God “by heart.” It wants to light an inner fire, the circulating force of divine energies flowing in and flowing out. The primal scream of postmodern spirituality is for primal experiences of God. (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, pg. 56)

If instead of screaming for “primal experiences of God” postmoderns need to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ so that they might experience His power in their lives. As it is Sweet tries to cater to their mistaken postmodern paradigm. Satan can light an inner fire and provide experiences that lead people away from Christ, and this is exactly what is happening in the counterfeit revivals and EC contemplative techniques.

Roxburgh quotes from Surfing the Edge of Chaos, that in times of discontinuous change "equilibrium is death." (Alan Roxburgh, The Sky Is Falling !?!, <http://www.nextreformation.com/wp-admin/reviews/falling.htm>)

I would completely disagree with Roxburgh’s quote of “Surfing the Edge of Chaos”. There is nothing more necessary during times of change than equilibrium, the equilibrium of the never changing, eternal Word of God. The problem with the lenses EC leadership are looking through is that they are the lenses of culture rather than the lenses of Scripture. If they want to understand modern culture all they have to do is look at it through the lessons of history and theography of the Bible. It is there we can find answers on how to reach people, not with new programs set on top of new programs, which never work and only confuse the core issues.

PANTHEISM

Through the synergy of the divine-human exchange of energies, an unbelievable field of healing and transforming energy is rounded up and released in the universe. Humans are constructed out of mutually attracting energy particles with positive and negative charges. Negative or neutral charges too often dominate human contacts. Positive charges in the church are about as rare as “strange matter”--positively charged lumps of quarks know as “quarknuggets”--is in the quantum world. “Consciousness is catching,” psychologist/medical scholar/professor Frances E. Vaughan reminds us. Destructive, negative, constricting states of consciousness are caught as readily as creative, positive, expanding states of consciousness. All energy states are contagious. (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, pg. 62)

This is a fusion of possibility thinking and New Age. What it boils down to is a pantheistic view of the universe. Just because humans are made up of atoms does not

mean that those atoms bind us all together in a shared “consciousness”. That is eastern mysticism. Sweet also uses this opportunity to put down Christians implying that they are “negative”. But since his thesis is ridiculous and wacky there is no need to take the dig seriously. There is no “synergy of divine-human exchange of energies” taught in the Bible. This implies that humans and God are one and the same matter. God is above energy and matter because He created it. God the “I AM” and is Spirit (John 4:24).

LEONARD SWEET (Author of Quantum Spirituality and Emerging Church leader) Sweet calls this the Theory of Everything. This theory not only says that all creation is connected but that it is all inhabited with Divinity (God).

(Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, comment by Tim Wirth, http://simplyagape.blogspot.com/2007_06_01_archive.html) Sweet got some of ideas and title of his book from Richard Hartnett, H.W., M. who is a nationally known Teacher and Psychic. His extensive training includes Sufism, Buddhism, Native American Spirituality, Jungian Symbolology and Gurdjieff's Fourth Way. You can read about his teaching on Quantum Spirituality at http://www.mrsdenver.org/Quantum_Spirituality.html

Ken Wilber (New Ager and author of A Theory of Everything) coined the term “theory of everything” which Leonard Sweet says is his idea. But whoever coined it or uses it is a pantheist. God does not inhabit His creation. He stands apart from it as the Creator. Though God is omnipresent He is not part of the makeup of created things. Is God part of the devil? Pantheism is very shallow thinking. God is not part of corruption brought about by sin.

"So far the church has refused to dip its toe into postmodern culture. A quantum spirituality challenges the church to bear its past and to dare its future by sticking its big TOE into the time and place of the present.... Then, and only then, will the church not appear to be in a timecapsule, sealed against new developments. Then, and only then, will a New Light movement of 'world-making' faith have helped to create the world that is to, and may yet, be. Then, and only then, will earthlings have uncovered the meaning of these words, some of the last words poet/activist/contemplative/bridge between East and West Thomas Merton uttered: "We are already one. But we imagine that we are not. And what we have to recover is our original unity." (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, pg. 10)

Sounds like Sweet has viewed too many science fiction movies. Earthlings? But then he goes on to quote Thomas Merton making a blatant pantheistic statement. We are not all one. Only those in the body of Christ are one in Him. Humanity is only one in the sense that we were all born into sin and the wages of sin is death. They are not one in some kind of pantheistic unity, nor is the point of the Gospel for them to “recover their original unity”. The Gospel can restore our relationship to God the Father through belief in Jesus Christ, but there is no “original unity” among human beings to recover.

"Pantheism is 'the belief or theory that God and the universe are identical' panentheism is 'the belief that the Being of God includes and penetrates the whole universe, so that every part of it exists in Him, but... that His Being is more than, and is not exhausted by, the Universe.'" ... "New Light spirituality does more than settle for the created order, as many forms of New Age pantheism do. But a spirituality that is not in some way theistic (whether pan- or trans-), that does not extend to the spirit-matter of the cosmos, is not Christian."
(Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, p. 123-124)

The definition given to an “updated” pantheism in this new “panentheism” is no better. It still has God as part of the creation, only giving Him a “more than” position. Sweet is trying to redefine Christianity in the image of false eastern religion. The “spirituality” of true believers is never based on the idea that God is part of His creation. Our worship of God is partly based on the fact that He is eternal and above and beyond the created things.

*“Austrian/American physicist Wolfgang Pauli perceived, are the **traceable connections that exist between ourselves and others or objects, and the underlying holism of the uni-verse. Transcendent state of consciousness**”*
(Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, p.234)

This is pantheism, pure and simple. There is no molecular “connection between ourselves and others or objects” that has any bearing on our spirituality. The universe is sustained by God at the molecular level but that does not make some kind of spiritual connection between all created things or make God a part of the created things.

*“If the church is to become a synergic space, it must first be Christianized. It must meet the ABCDE involutions of the “X Factor.” The ABCDE rule for synergic Christbody inter-connections and in-formation is as follows: Alterity, Bonding, Critical Mass, Dirt, Euphonics. The ABCDE involutions, when placed in a biblical framework, represent evolutionary steps to higher spirituality and the ecclesiastics of synergy”. **The church must provide postmoderns with an alterity of rituals by which they can turn and tune to one another and feel connected to the cosmos.** (Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, p. 137).*

There are no “evolutionary steps to higher spirituality” in the sense that Sweet proposes. The job of the Church is not to “tune to one another and feel connected to the cosmos”. If Sweet wants to do that then I suggest he practice TM so that the enemy can fully delude him into thinking we are all one. We don’t need an “alterity of rituals”, meaning we exchange our views for that of other religions in order to reach God. What we need is to get away from useless rituals and follow what the Bible teaches.

EASTERN MYSTICISM

*Quoted by Sweet in *Quantum Spirituality*: Rabbi/theologian/storyteller Lawrence Kushner makes an intriguing contrast between the Jewish and Christian*

*traditions precisely at this point in The River of Light Spirituality; Judaism, and the Evolution of Consciousness (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981). For Christianity, the central problem is how God could have become person. How spirit could transform itself into matter. Word become flesh. Consciousness become protoplasm. The direction is from the top down. For Judaism, on the other hand, the problem is how humanity could possibly attain to God's word and intention. How matter could raise itself to spirit. How simple desert souls could hear the word. Human substance attain consciousness. **The intention is "to permeate matter and raise it to spirit."** The direction is from the bottom up. Perhaps the two traditions, one moving down, the other moving up, are destined to meet in the divinity of humanity. (82) (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, pg. 191)*

Humanity is not divine. That is clear eastern mysticism ... and this from a man who is arguably the intellegencia of the EC movement. It is a wonder to me how so many are following this New Ager. Yes God became man. No, man does not become God.

*"According to the Oxford English Dictionary, to inform means 'to give form to, put into form and shape.' **The purpose of the church is to give form to, to put into form and shape, the energymatter known as Jesus Christ. New Light** leaders, therefore, are in-formational connectors helping the body of Christ to become an in-formed church, an in-formational community." ... "**New Light** leadership helps patches of information become cloaks of knowledge. Information brokering is central to **creating community** in postmodern culture, not to mention achieving **synergic states of group consciousness**. Association of Theological Schools president/divinity school dean **Jim L. Waits**, in his address at the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of Emory University's Candler School of Theology, calls for clergy to move from their 'learned ministry' model to a "'knowledgeable ministry' model. 'Knowledge ministry' helps information become 'alive in the consciousness,' as Einstein put it...." (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, p. 120-121)*

Jesus Christ has His own form and, by they way, He is 100% God and 100% man for all eternity since His incarnation. He was and will always be God but added humanity on to His nature in order that He might save us from our sins. The Church does not form Jesus Christ out of some made up substance called "energymatter" that has no basis in Scripture, only in occult religion. If Sweet is talking about Jesus Christ being Hypostatic, which I do not believe he is guided by the context of his statement, then we are still left with the ridiculous notion that the job of the Church is to "put into form and shape" the nature of Jesus Christ so that people will follow Him. It is our job to testify about what He is and what He came to do, not create something we had and never will have even any possibility of creating. Yet "young minds full of mush" in Christian campuses all over the nation are being taught this stuff by a guy who does not know his Bible, and if he does is adding or taking away from it (Rev. 22:18-19).

*Pr 30:6 **Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.***

"Christbody communities must come to be seen as thermodynamic units in which the rules of the conservation and degradation of energy apply. Some preachers almost unwittingly do an energy analysis of a congregation, assessing the energy charge of a room, pinpointing the energy flow, and drawing strength from those hot spots from which energy emanates most powerfully...."Reluctance to see communities of faith as information-processing systems and the refusal to assist people in exploring and critiquing the unexamined metaphors by which they live helps explain why oldline communities are in such a state of entropic decline and disarray. Yet entropies of information produce variety within a species as well as new species themselves. The second law of thermodynamics states that energymatter decomposes and, what is more, that the more entropy grows, the less the amount of usable energy. Since the total amount of energy and mass in the universe cannot change, the entropic consequence of the second law is known as evolution. ... "A major New Light undertaking is the designing of newstream communities that can be 'in connection' and 'in-formation' with the spirit of Christ. Christ will be embodied for the postmodern church in information." (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, p. 121)

This is pure occultism; the same type practiced by Toronto "Blessing" and Brownsville "Revival" advocates. This is New Age occultism, not Christianity. Interestingly if we believe Sweet's assertion in the quote above this one, then Jesus Christ would have to decompose because He is "energymatter" and we are to promote that about Him. Would we not then be promoting something that is "decomposing"? What double talk! And further we are led to believe by Sweet that Christianity is "evolving". The Bible clearly states that in the end time, which we are in according to the signs of the times, there will be a downward devolution of what is known as Christianity, not an upward evolution (2 Thes. 2:3). There is no such concept or phrase as "in connection" or "in-formation" in the Bible. There is no New Light, only the eternal Light, Jesus Christ. This "new light" is the light of Gnosticism leading people by way of diaprax into new revelation that is beyond what is written (1 Cor. 4:6)

"Energy-fire experiences take us into ourselves only that we might reach outside of ourselves. Metanoia is a de-centering experience of connected-ness and community. It is not an exercise in reciting what Jesus has done for me lately. Energy-fire ecstasy, more a buzz than a binge, takes us out of ourselves, literally. That is the meaning of the word 'ecstatic.'" (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, P. 93)

We don't need to be taken "out of ourselves" by paranormal ecstatic experiences. We need to be taught to get away from self-love, which this promotes even though it sounds otherwise, into the realm of loving God and loving others as ourselves (Gal. 5:14). The point, made time and again by Sweet, is that any "energy-fire ecstasy" in any religion is all from the same source ... God. The actual meaning, by the way, of the word "metanoia" is repentance. But Sweet uses an alternate less used definition that means to change one's mind. Now if a person changes their mind about their own godness and

righteousness before God and accepts the fact that they are a sinner, that is a good thing, though that can only happen if the Holy Spirit convicts. But Sweet is using “metonoia” to mean Christians need to change their mind about what it means to be a Christian and accept the ideas of other religions. They certainly have gone a long way down that road by accepting Latter Rain, Word of Faith, Dominionist and Emerging Church teachings ... like this one.

NEW AGE

The following are five gross premises of embodiment... that build anew the body of Christ for the postmodern era -- being “in connection” and “in-formation” with: (1) other Christians, (2) all creation, (3) one’s ancestors and ancestral memories, (4) other faiths, (5) technology.... ([1] “With Other Christians:”) The first of these five untheorized observations is that New Light embodiment means to be “in connection” and “in-formation” with other Christians.... The church is fundamentally one being, one person, a communion whose cells are connected to one another within the information network called the Christ consciousness. No congregation or denomination can go it alone in being the body of Christ.... To be “in connection” and “in-formation” is to be related to other Christians and the shared culture of all Christians and to grow a set of organic relationships and coalitions around a common love for God "Communities have souls, not just individuals. The modern era downplayed a biblical doctrine of salvation that had this communal dimension. In contrast, the New Light movement is concerned about the salvation of ensouled communities as well as individual souls, and the salvation of community souls relating synergistically to one another. ... The power of community is the energy of between: The synergizing of synergies in which “one [shall] chase a thousand, and two [shall] put ten thousand to flight” (Deut. 32:30).... (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, p. 122)

Being “in-formation” with other faiths does not build “the body of Christ”. We can know about other faiths but for the purpose of demolishing arguments against the truths of the Bible and against demonic strongholds (2 Cor. 10:4-5), which is the very definition of false religions. Christianity is not built on “Christ-consciousness”, a term coined by the New Age. It is a term that does not refer to Jesus Christ but rather the Weltgeist, the world spirit, which is the spirit of AntiChrist, the spirit of the age (1 John 4:3). This type of teaching is simply setting Christians up to participate and give over their worldview to the world spirit, the coming false religion of the world under the False Prophet and AntiChrist. There is no salvation of communities and nations but only of individuals (Jer. 31:30). John 3:3 states that “**no-one** can see the kingdom of God unless **he** is born again.” Notice that Jesus was talking about individuals, not groups of people. Each man is answerable for himself (Jer. 31:30), and each must decide for or against Jesus (2 Cor. 5:10).

The power of small groups is in their ability to develop the discipline to get people "in-phase" with the Christ consciousness and connected with one another. (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, P. 147)

Small groups that are Biblically based are reflective of the first century church house churches. Sweet is trying to turn them into places of indoctrination into the New Age “Christ consciousness”.

New Lights offer up themselves as the cosmions of a mind-of-Christ consciousness. As a cosmion incarnating the cells of a new body, New Lights will function as transitional vessels through which transforming energy can renew the divine image in the world, moving postmoderns from one state of embodiment to another. (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, P. 48)

Christians have the Light living in them but they are not to offer themselves up to the New Age. “Cosmions” is a word Sweet had culled from the world of NASA meaning part of what makes up “nonsymmetric gravitational theory”. This gravitation theory is allegedly “based on the numbers of stable protons, neutrons, neutrinos, and cosmions (weakly interacting massive particles). (<http://www.adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/1989PhRvD..39..474M>) So Christians are pictured as “weakly interacting massive particles” in the “cosmos”. Through these weak particles some kind of force or “transforming energy” will be unleashed on the world. This will cause postmoderns to allegedly “move from one state of embodiment to another”. I have to say that out of this gobblety gook I am left remembering Paul’s warning for Christians to be discerning so they will not be tossed to and fro with every wave of teaching (Eph. 4:14). Subjectivists are ALWAYS moving from one idea to another in the flux of EC teachings.

*David Spangler who Sweet favorably quotes also speaks of Lucifer as: “The true light of this great being can only be recognized when one's own eyes can see with the light of the Christ, the light of the inner sun. **Lucifer works within each of us to bring us to wholeness, and as we move into the New Age,** which is the age of man's wholeness, each of us is brought to that point which I term the Luciferic Initiation, the particular doorway through which the individual must pass if he is to come fully into the presence of his light and his wholeness. **Lucifer comes to give us the final gift of wholeness.** If we accept it, then he is free and we are free, that is the Luciferic Initiation. It is one that many people now, and in the days ahead, will be facing, **for it is an initiation into the New Age.** (David Spangler (quoted by Leonard Sweet), Reflections on the Christ, Findhorn Lecture Series, 3rd ed., 1981; p. 45)*

So it is Lucifer who is now the savior? It is the devil that gives us the gift of wholeness? Blasphemy!

*God claims everything one is. God claims every rationality. God claims every sensibility. **Quantum spirituality is more than a structure of the intellect; it is more than a structure of emotion; it is more than a structure of human being. It is most importantly a structure of human becoming, a channeling of Christ energies through mindbody experience.**28 (Leonard Sweet, Quantum Spirituality, pg. 53)*

Now Christians are instructed to “channel” Christ energies. Channeling is what mediums do. Mediums are under the judgment of God (Lev. 19:31, 20:27, De. 18:10-12, Is. 8:19).

*My wife and I spent an hour in the labyrinth and found ourselves calmed and refreshed, our perspective uniquely restored . We made our own prayer path after the convention—we knew we couldn’t keep this experience to ourselves. A few months later we featured a labyrinth as part of Graceland’s annual art event at Santa Cruz Bible Church. Graceland artists recreated the labyrinth with a kit we purchased (The Prayer Path, Group Publishing), transforming one of the church’s multipurpose rooms into a medieval prayer sanctuary. **The team hung art on the walls, draped fabric, and lit candles all around the room to create a visual sense of sacred space.** (Commentary of Dan Kimball’s Article “A-mazing Prayer: The Labyrinth Offers Ancient Meditation For Today’s Hurried Souls by Jane Whiting)*

You cannot be “restored” spiritually by walking a labyrinth. What is a “sacred space” anyway? Perhaps these guys have been watching too much Highlander where immortals cannot kill each other in a sacred space called “holy ground”. You do not create holy ground by putting art on walls, draping fabric, lighting candles and plotting out a labyrinth. If you want to meet with God, go to your room, study your Bible (2 Tim. 2:15), and pray to the Lord in private.

*Mt 6:6 **But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.***

SOCIAL GOSPEL

*Dan Kimball adds, “Our faith also includes kingdom living, part of which **is the responsibility to fight locally and globally for social justice on behalf of the poor and needy.** Our example is Jesus, who spent His time among the lepers, the poor and the needy.” (Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), p. 224.)*

Part of the EC paradigm shift is that of Dominionism and changing the Gospel into a social gospel. It is good to stand up for what is right and be light and salt in the world. But that is not our primary responsibility. In fact the Bible does not tell us to claim we can save the planet or solve all the ills brought about by sin. We are to feed the poor and needy, but we must first feed them with the Gospel. Our goal must first be about their spirits, not their flesh. Notice that Jesus spent His time among the needy preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. He fed them as in the feeding of the 5000 but not before they had heard the Word of God. Our mandate is not to change government structures or to take over the business world to usher in the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God has come spiritually but it will not come physically until Christ returns. The Church is not here to establish God’s physical Kingdom on earth. Those who promote

Dominionism such as Kimbal, Sweet, McLaren, C. Peter Wagner, Rick Warren and many others are causing churches to get their priorities off the Great Commission and on to things that will not only not benefit God's work, but actually destroy the work of missions and churches. Those who buy into the programs of Rick Warren, C. Peter Wagner and others are leaving true Biblical principles for those of the Latter Rain, New Apostolic Reformation and Emerging Church movement, and Biblical mission work gets crushed in the process.

HOMOSEXUALITY

*"What if there are thousands of John Calvins out there.... **what if God decided to make a lot of them gay?**"(Brian McLaren, Lecture at Princeton Theological Seminary, Nov. 2005)*

God does not make gay people. Though I personally believe that, like everything else human, there is a genetic predisposing to certain sinful ways such as homosexuality, it is ultimately a choice. If you are born of parents who have a critical nature, for instance, and you don't want to be like that you have to make a decision not to be that way. Of course you cannot ultimately fulfill that decision without the help of God, and that can only come as a born again Christian. But don't blame God for making you be gay. You chose whether or not you are gay, even if you have a proclivity in that area. It is like every other decision in life. You choose whether or not to smoke, to drink alcohol, to take drugs, to practice sexual perversion, to be a thief, to be a murderer or to be an Emerging Church follower. You may have a genetic predisposition to do things that are sinful and harmful to yourself, but it is still a choice. Homosexuality is ultimately a choice and God calls it sin (1 Cor. 6:9, Jude 1:7) therefore if you want to follow God you must make the choice God expects. To blame God for the sin of choosing homosexuality or lesbianism or any other sexual perversion or sin is to blaspheme God.

*And yet, all the time **I could feel myself drifting toward acceptance that gay persons are fully human persons and should be afforded all of the cultural and ecclesial benefits that I am.** ("Aha!" my critics will laugh derisively, "I knew he and his ilk were on a continuous leftward slide!") ... In any case, **I now believe that GLBTQ can live lives in accord with biblical Christianity (at least as much as any of us can!) and that their monogamy can and should be sanctioned and blessed by church and state.** (Tony Jones, Same Sex Marriage Blogologue: How I Went from There to Here, *Online source, bold theirs*)*

Homosexuals are under the judgment of God, therefore how can they have the "ecclesial benefits" of the Church (Rom. 1:26-32)? In the history of the Church, not even the apostate Roman Catholic Church married men to men or women to women. Those under God's judgment living lifestyle sins are not living "in accord with biblical Christianity". They are living contrary to it. Homosexual

marriage may be indeed blessed by the state but any Biblical church cannot and must not bless it.

***RM:** You mentioned earlier that **you have lesbian pastors** and conservative absolutists. It seems that it would create a tension point when it comes to endorsing that person's view or platform.*

***Tony Jones:** If you believe that Christianity is—at its very heart—a tension-filled, dialectical endeavor, you have less problems with these tension-filled relationships with believers. Christianity is paradoxical. Life comes out of death. Jesus was fully human and fully divine. **We haven't yet found that there's anything that justifies us breaking fellowship with somebody else who loves and is trying to follow Jesus.** (On file at AM, emphasis mine) (Relevant Magazine, on file at Apprising Ministries)*

The very first thing a lesbian would need to do is stop practicing lesbianism in order to follow Christ. If they have not then they are not saved because they have not recognized the practiced sin they are living. You cannot live in sin and claim to be saved.

*1Jo 5:18 We know that **anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.**
1 John 3:4 **Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. (NASB)***

Those who continue to live in sin, practice a lifestyle of sin, cannot call themselves believers. They have not been saved out of lawlessness.

*"Asked at a conference last spring what he thought about gay marriage, Brian McLaren replied, "You know what, **the thing that breaks my heart is that there's no way I can answer it without hurting someone on either side.**" (Brian McLaren, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1022583-10,00.html>.)*

Who says the issue is about offending anyone? The issue is about truth! What does God's word say about homosexuality? It condemns it as a sin and that is what it is. McLaren should state so. Of course, this does not mean that we are to be offensive to homosexuals needlessly. We are to love them and be patient with them. But we also need to tell them the truth when the time is right. (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality>)

"Frankly, many of us don't know what we should think about homosexuality. We've heard all sides but no position has yet won our confidence so that we can say "it seems good to the Holy Spirit and us." That alienates us from both the liberals and conservatives who seem to know exactly what we should think. Even if we are convinced that all homosexual behavior is always sinful, we still want to treat gay and lesbian people with more dignity, gentleness, and respect than our

colleagues do. If we think that there may actually be a legitimate context for some homosexual relationships, we know that the biblical arguments are nuanced and multilayered, and the pastoral ramifications are staggeringly complex. We aren't sure if or where lines are to be drawn, nor do we know how to enforce with fairness whatever lines are drawn." (Brian McLaren, http://blog.christianitytoday.com/outofur/archives/2006/01/brian_mclaren_o.html)

In my opinion, McLaren is far too concerned with political correctness and is not concerned enough with biblical fidelity. He is right in that we need to treat gay and lesbian people with dignity and respect. They are, after all, made in God's image. But, the practice of homosexuality is a practice of sin against the law of God. He cannot excuse it by saying he doesn't know what to think about homosexuality. (<http://www.carm.org/religious-movements/emerging-church/brian-mclaren-quotes-bible-homosexuality>)

CONTEMPLATIVE

Brian McLaren of the "emerging church" calls contemplative Richard Foster the key mentor for the movement. (Christianity Today, November 2004) ... "[H]e (Brian McLaren) concludes that the emerging church must be "monastic"—centered on training disciples who practice, rather than just believe, the faith.... He cites Dallas Willard and Richard Foster, with their emphasis on spiritual disciplines, as key mentors for the emerging church" (<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/brianmclaren.htm>)

The Emerging Church is a platform to bring monastic contemplative mysticism into the churches. But these contemplative teachings are a thin veil of New Age practices. The people who influenced Richard Foster and others were contemplatives in the Catholic Church who were, themselves, clearly influenced by eastern mysticism. You can read a list of those influences in [my article about Allelon](#).

SECOND COMING

The phrase 'the Second Coming of Christ' never actually appears in the Bible. Whether or not the doctrine to which the phrase refers deserves rethinking, a popular abuse of it certainly needs to be named and rejected. (McLaren, Everything Must Change, Jesus, Global Crises, and a Revolution of Hope (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), pg. 144.)

Then what is Revelation all about?

Mal 3:2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap.

*2Th 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his **mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.***

*1Jo 2:28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be **confident and unashamed before him at his coming.***

Oops. Apparently McLaren forgot to check his Bible on this. Though the phrase “the second coming of Christ” does not appear, the Bible is replete with information about the second coming. This is like saying that the phrase “the Trinity” is not in the Bible therefore there is no Trinity taught in the Bible. This is childish absurdity. What McLaren wants to rid the churches of is the expectation of an imminent return of Christ (2 Pet. 3:3-4). He teaches Dominionism which has done away with the Rapture and, apparently, even the second coming. How can man rethink the second coming of Christ? It is not up to man.

CONFUSION OF THE EC TEACHINGS

*Alan Roxburgh was up next. He addressed the question of the conference, “What is a missional leader?” And then he gave us his standard responses: “**I don’t know,**” “**Does it matter?**” “**Who cares?**” Why do we want a definition so desperately? Because we are moderns. Definitions are modern constructs. The need to define the missional church and missional leadership is a modern need to define, name, control and plan. So, if I do what I’m not supposed to do (create a definition), the best I could say is, “a missional leader is one who can change as the world changes around him/her.”*

(<http://timneufeld.blogs.com/occasio/2007/06/index.html>)

So there need be no definition for “missional”? Could this be a bad excuse for having none? There is always a definition for everything, unless you are a subjectivist who believes that “truth” is always in a state of flux. If definitions are impossible to nail down, then truth is also.

***THE CHURCH’S EXPERIENCE is shifting from a stable and secure world toward a huge, open-ended question. If one word characterizes people’s experiences of this, it is uncertainty.** (Alan Roxburgh, *Crossing The Bridge*, pg. 24)*

If the EC churches are not based on the Rock and the teachings of His Apostles then it is no wonder that they end up in confusion and “open-ended questions”.

*Another metaphor is a tapestry woven from a wide number of diverse strands forming our Christendom world. **For quite some time that amazing tapestry has been unraveling, until it now lies threadbare, like tattered threads on the cultural floor.** (Alan Roxburgh, *Crossing The Bridge*, pg. 21)*

EC and other false teaching systems are what is creating chaos in the churches, not the diversion of denominations.

The word missional has become a catch phrase. An awful lot of energy, on the one hand, but high ambiguity and confusion, oftentimes, on the other hand.
(Dr. Craig van Gelder, <http://www.allelon.org/history.cfm>)

What would then make the scheme these people have cooked up attractive to any true believer? When you get away from the Biblical mandate and Biblical teachings, you end up with a lot of misspent energy that leads to “high ambiguity and confusion”. Why is it that Gelder is not heeding his own words and getting out of this movement?