



The Plumblin

Assessing Current Teachings, Issues and Events with Scripture

If You Hold Hands with the World Long Enough, Don't Be Surprised If You Start Going Steady

In the last edition of the Plumblin, I and others detailed how the neo-evangelical experiment, now over 50 years old, has unfortunately resulted in the Gospel being infiltrated with cultural thinking and practice in ways that were surely not predicted back at the institution of the neo-evangelical experiment. Surely, there was a need for a new openness to the culture in order to reach the culture. The fundamentalists of the 30's and 40's had become unnecessarily inclusive and even separatistic. What was needed was a move to presenting the Gospel openly and without embarrassment. The fundamentalist legalism of no lipstick etc. was too separatistic and legalistic. The neo-evangelical move to open biblical and evangelical seminaries fulfilled a great need. But as the new evangelical movement progressed, speaking clearly became confused with joining the culture. In my view, however, the new movement went from friendly discussion to dialogue looking for accommodation. The Chuck Coulson initiated movement, "Evangelical and Catholics Together" (ECT), to me was some kind of watershed, which resulted in a great desire to unify and adapt the gospel we preach with the message of Rome which does not have a saving gospel. This ultimately opened the door for the new pope Francis to emotionally appeal to Charismatics at a pastors conference via a cell phone and getting a huge welcome from Kenneth Copeland the titular head of the Word/Faith movement with hundreds of cheering pastors in attendance. Later James Robison/Beth Moore and others listened to this same emotional ecumenical plea from pope Francis and also responded with joy.

Consequently, what began in the 50's as recognizing the world we live in by the formers of the neo-evangelical movement has now moved on to open flirting with a worldly culture. Obviously the Promise-Keepers movement which had a great goal became much more when Catholics and the Mormon cultists were called "my dear brothers." The Catholics and Mormons were seen by the world and judged by the evangelicals to be full participants in the Gospel. This was more than communication. It was telling a watching world that we are one. Is this not public flirting with an eye toward engagement?

The Gospel was never originally intended to openly accommodate the culture and rely on the culture for success or failure. If you accommodate the culture (and post-modern culture demands this) in order to supposedly infiltrate and accommodate it, you have to adjust your presentation and instead of strengthening the Gospel you weaken it. Here is how the culture views this. Postmodern culture must increase and the gospel must decrease. Consequently, it is not brave evangelism to allow this to happen. Paul never saw the surrounding culture as an equal power. No! Indeed, the gospel fully preached and explained in scripture was seen as uniquely the "dunamis" power of God unto salvation. Indeed, we must boldly and with great grace and humility present the fullness of the Christian gospel and let the chips fall where they may. It is not our gospel. It is God's gospel. To trim it to fit the fads of the culture simply shows our embarrassment of His Gospel. No! we must plant the "good seed" of the gospel. Indeed, the fundamentalists of the twenties identified clearly the Gospel message. Their publication of the five fundamentals was and still is an excellent book. It is basic and easy to understand. We don't need to load it up with worldly additives and then boast of our cunning evangelism. The preaching of the good seed of the gospel has its own divine convincing force, namely the Holy Spirit. Then, when the Gospel gets a response we know it was God and not our clever innovation of the message that made the difference, lest we boast in our cultural expertise. We don't need to try to attempt to infiltrate and accommodate the culture for it will require a trimming of the fullness of the good seed of the gospel. We must spread the Gospel widely and actively and let God provide the good soil, that will produce a hundred fold. Its God's harvest not ours and He is the one who gives the increase right? Postmodern culture is powerful in it's own setting and if we tailor our message to postmodern terms, the culture will overpower us and our trimmed down gospel will only get smaller and less powerful.

I Have a mental picture of a parade with a postmodern float decked out in seductive expression.. But clinging to the back of this postmodern float are the gospel bike riders catching a free ride and they resemble the postmodern

float with accommodating color schemes etc. But this is really an embarrassment. And wherever the postmodern float goes the gospel bikers have to go where the float is going. If the postmodern float changes its major presentation then the gospel bike riders must change as well.

The gospel deserves its own float in the cultural parade. Great care should be given that the gospel float accurately presents the power of the gospel unto salvation. The success is when "God gives the increase."

Did the New Age Originally Steal its "Stuff" From the Church?

Apostle Bill Johnson of Bethel Church Redding, CA has presented a new justification for all the non-biblical physical manifestations that are the calling cards for his Bethel movement. This justification is his attempt cover for the bizarre expressions that supposedly currently express God's Kingdom on earth. Apostle Bill Johnson, however, is much more than a local pastor. He leads an international movement that reaches the whole earth. He has thousands of young people from many countries attend a course in supernatural ministry each year. He recently was honored to be a member of the International Pentecostal Committee that will present a 2000 year historical re-enactment of Pentecost in Jerusalem later this year. Johnson and his crew are no tempest in a teapot. Johnson has co-authored with his wife Beni and Judy Franklin his personal assistant and a number of "seer prophets" a book entitled "The Physics of Heaven." In this book they assert that in the unknown past, the New Age stole various manifestations from the church and that now is the time reclaim these back from the New Age. In this volume "seer prophet" Jonathan Weldon asserts that he has found at least 75 examples of things the New Age secretly high-jacked from scripture and the church. This stolen property, Weldon asserts, includes spirit guides, auras, power objects, clairvoyance and etc. Weldon claims these belonged to the church, but were stolen and cleverly repackaged by the New Age. Weldon further asserts: "Every time a New Age counterfeit sign shows up, take it as the Lord presenting you an opportunity to reclaim the churches stolen property." This actually *simply advances a common trick and explanation for new manifestations by the sign/gift movement.* Certain ultra-charismatic media pastors have suggested this before. But Bethel and Co. have decided to press their case further. They claim that Satan is unable create anything and can only mimic God. Consequently, for every New Age sign or wonder there must be a corresponding work of God. But the New Age is actually the old age of spurious and false miracles. Paul never considered spirit guides or auras for his ministry tool box. Johnson's attempt is to supposedly recapture these things from the New Age. Johnson and other sign/gift enthusiasts have actually reduced their case into a logical syllogism as follows:

Major Premise: Satan is helpless to originate a sign or wonder and can only mimic God.

Minor Premise: Satan and demons do signs and wonders.

Conclusion: Every demonic sign or wonder is a mimicking of a sign and wonder of God that we should recapture. But in any syllogism if any part of a logical syllogism is false, then the whole syllogism is false and can be ignored. Lets pick a historical sign and wonder. For example, certain medieval nuns were known to miraculously hang like bats from trees. If the demonic can only mimic God, there must be an original divine God produced hanging from trees. But even a sophomore logic student could invalidate the above. The major premise is false and unprovable. Actually this becomes a huge open door to expand upon the false miraculous offerings promoted by Bethel and others by borrowing openly and directly from the New Age at will. Rather the above major premise could better be stated that Johnson and co. are preparing to steal from the New Age/ Occult and present them to the church as reclaimed property.

Larry DeBruyn has been working on a serial book review and theological interaction with the book, "The Physics of Heaven." referred to above. This review will give the reader a full discussion of an unbelievable attempt to acquire present teachings and practices from the New Age and present them to the church. This will further invite the New Age openly into the church. To find these chapter reviews of "The Physics of Heaven" the reader can access them at herescope.blogspot.com on the net.

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