

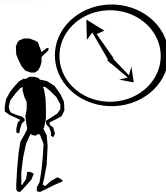
THE BATTLE CREEK BULLETIN

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Time of Assembly



Sunday:

Bible Study 4:00 p.m.
Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 p. m.

"We are Hard-Pressed on Every Side..."

By Bill Fairchild, Jr.

"We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed ... always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our body"
(2 Corinthians 4:8-10, NKJV).

The scene from Indiana Jones' movie Raiders of the Lost Ark is a nightmarish scene to someone like me who does not like snakes... PERIOD! Everywhere he looked there were snakes! The fact is he was surrounded by them!

My father-in-law had a similar experience many years ago as a 'timber man' in West Virginia. As he was surveying a prospective section of timber to cut, he noticed on the ridge not far from him... movement. When he looked more closely ... the ridge was 'alive' with copperheads!

Carefully looking around himself, he eased back to his truck. Now, the end of the story is that they ended up cutting timber, but not before having to dynamite the entire ridge! All I can say to that is, "I never was cut out to be a timber man!" You see... this fellow hates snakes!

Where are we going with all of this? Simple! The world we are living in presently is darkening! All we have to do is listen to the news whether it is local or national and it projects scenes of anger, hostility, meanness, insensitivity and open disgust for God and anyone who serves Him.

It can be... and often is the case... that God's people not only feel outnumbered but surrounded by the enemy that is bent on ridicule and persecution. Morality has taken a back seat to self-indulgence, self-will and self-rule!

Not only has God been removed from the classroom, He is being systematically removed from society... at least

that is what society thinks! Those of us who believe in, serve and honor the Lord... know otherwise!

Satan must be pleased with all that is transpiring in the hearts and lives of so many and he would like nothing more than to see God's people adopt the same philosophies and turn their hearts away from God!

Just as David did... when we take a look around... we need to start looking up! We need to look past all of the distractions of rampant sin, mistreatment, pandemics, and the negative realities of life... and look to and see as David writes near the end of Psalm 10:16, *"The Lord is King forever and ever..."*

"God is working out His eternal purpose, not only in spite of human and satanic opposition, but by means of them." - A.W. Pink

Brothers and sisters in Christ... my good friends... we must discipline ourselves to stay focused upon the right things and do as the apostle Paul urged the brethren at Colossi to do, *"Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth"* (Col. 3:2).

As individuals who are husbands, wives, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and friends... it is our place to not only have our own faith to believe that our greatest joys should be found in the service of the King... we must teach the next generation and the next generation... do not allow yourself to be squeezed into being like the world around them (Romans 12:2)!

The apostle Paul by inspiration describes for the Corinthian brethren where the power and the glory resides and that is... in the message... not the messenger! We have been entrusted with His saving message as *"God's elect people... His royal priestly people... His own special people... His holy nation!"* And that, my friends is the privilege we have then to *"proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light"* (1 Peter 2:9). And those in the world generally don't care about any of this... but there are still some souls out there with *"good and honest hearts"* who are looking and searching for the truth... and we must demonstrate it in our lives... share it with our words... regardless of the cost!

Our God is great! Our God is good! And one day, all that have and are living in this world will answer to the One true and living God (Romans 1:18). And then *"... every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father"* (Philippians 2:10-11).

Yes... we are surrounded by so much that is evil, wrong and disgusting, but there is One who is greater that assures His people of His presence, love and care! God grant each of us the desire keep our eyes on Him and our hearts focused on His Word!

I thank God for protecting me from what I thought I wanted and blessing me with what I didn't know I needed. #RehabTime

The Emerging Church - The New Face of Heresy

By Wayne Jackson

Recently, Charles Colson, a leading evangelical writer, pointed out: last June a Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life survey found rampant doctrinal ignorance among American Christians. Fifty-seven percent of evangelicals believed people who follow religions other than their own can enjoy eternal life. The results were so unexpected that Pew repeated the survey, asking more specific questions. The answers were virtually unchanged. Astonishingly, about half believed that everyone, atheists included, was going to end up in heaven. Heaven for the godless? That's the old heresy of universalism (2009).

The thinking of many who profess an identification with some form of "Christianity" has become mushy indeed. Here is a typical comment from a student of the so-called neo-evangelical community.

It is not now, nor was it at the time of the reformation, the **correct teaching** or doctrine which brought the reformation. It was being willing to challenge the Church with living out the doctrine which mattered most. Today we need a reformation of **less teaching** and more living (emphasis added).

This statement is senseless. How about **more** teaching and **better** living? How can there be correct living without proper teaching?

If we may borrow an expression from Solomon, "there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9); the same old heresies just undergo superficial theological cosmetic surgery—or to use another metaphor, they are recycled. Let us reflect upon several old ideas with new faces.

UNIVERSALISM

Universalism asserts that there will be the final and complete salvation of all beings. The dogma was taught by some of the early church writers, e.g., Clement and Origen of Alexandria, who lived in the mid-second to mid-third centuries A.D. There is no biblical basis for this dogma (see [**The Growing Trend Toward Universalism**](#)). Yet most folks seem to be inclining to the notion that almost everyone — if not literally everyone — will be saved ultimately.

POSTMODERNISM

The expression "postmodernism" is not found in Van Harvey's book, *A Handbook of Theological Terms*, published in 1968. It is a relatively new designation. Postmodernism denies universal truth. Supposedly, truth is how each individual feels about things, not how they really are. Hence, supposedly there is no **exclusive**, true gospel. The facts of Christianity must be redefined by a new vocabulary in preaching, writing, and worship. This is a wrong-headed ideology.

THE EMERGING CHURCH

The so-called “emerging church” is the stepchild of postmodernism. This ideology contends it is arrogant to believe that one knows the truth; instead the “truth” is that truth is only determined subjectively, being fashioned by culture, not Scripture. Is this concept even remotely associated with a logical thought process?

It is contended that each person must find his own way to God, and not be addicted to “bibliolatry.” This sounds like the philosophy of those rebels who lived in the dark ages of Israel’s history (Judges 21:25). The “emergist” believes all are arrogant who do not subscribe to his elastic view of truth. He absolutely **knows** one cannot **know** absolute truth.

Several of these aberrant ideas have found their way into churches that once were conservative. For example, it is argued by an increasing number that we cannot declare as gospel truth that those are wrong who disagree with our “traditional” teaching. All teaching is now declared to be mere tradition.

What difference does it make whether one believes that baptism is “*for* [unto, to obtain] the remission of sins,” or whether it is “*because of* remission of sins.” It is alleged that gospel preachers of bygone years who debated with the sectarians on the design of baptism were misguided. Some are contending that the mode of baptism is irrelevant; sprinkling is as valid as immersion, and those baptized as infants must not be excluded from Christian fellowship. To speak of a “non-immersion baptism” is an oxymoron, because “baptize” by definition signifies “to immerse.”

“Emerging” churches are restructuring the worship format. The Lord’s supper is being offered in conjunction with special events, e.g., weddings. The communion memorial is not restricted to the Lord’s day; instead groups step beyond the biblical pattern and provide it on weekdays, ignoring a New Testament that is undergirded with historical truth, namely the Lord’s resurrection on Sunday.

The music issue is wide open among a growing number of churches. A prominent church in Dallas (that once hosted a respected school of preaching) recently advertised for a “minister of music.” One of the stipulations was that he must be able to play the guitar or the electronic keyboard. Choirs, praise teams, clapping to accompany singing, etc., are becoming standard fare in a number of churches. Performance is rapidly supplementing congregational worship. Biblical authority yields to emotionalism. It is the new “will-worship” (Colossians 2:23).

These are trying times for the body of Christ. But it is not a time for despair. Instead, courageous men and women must keep the ship of Zion on a straight (and strait) course within the boundaries of divine truth. Truth will prevail in spite of the winds of change—and irrelevant statistics.

The Constitution and the Bible

By Terry W. Benton

The debate over the Constitution illustrates some of the same problems in agreeing over the Bible. The problem does not come **from** these documents. It comes from the agenda of those who approach either one. Some are intent on making law to fit their own will and so they are not interested in following the Constitution or the Bible. They decided what they want the law to be, and so, there is not enough respect for what is written to have any meaningful diligence in studying to find out what it says and how to use it properly to guide your life.

Some approach the Constitution and the Bible with prejudice. They think it is too old to be relevant to the Modern American or the Modern Christian. It is like they think they can improve the Constitution or the Bible. So, they seek to impose their will upon either of these documents.

In our modern concern about the next Supreme Court justice there are those who do not want a judge who respects the Constitution and will work only to properly interpret it and apply it properly and carefully. They cringe and protest that very idea. The problem is not in the Constitution but in the agenda that seeks to over-rule the Constitution.

Likewise, the multiple divisions and denominations do not exist because of the Bible but because of the agenda men bring to the Bible. If your purpose is to seek the will of God even if it requires great changes and adjustments in your attitude and behavior, you can know the truth that can set you free from sin and condemnation. But, if you just want to select from the Bible only the things that agree with you, and you feel that you can ignore other things or overrule other things and impose your desires upon the Bible, then you will come out with a church that looks nothing like the churches of Christ that we read about in the New Testament.

The problem is in the approach to the document, not in the documents themselves. I hope for a Supreme Court Justice that respects the Constitution and will be careful to interpret how it is upheld and applied to the modern American, and I hope people will return to giving the Bible an even greater respect, and be careful to submit their own will to the will of God, and handle aright the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15). In both cases there would then be more unity.

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Thanks to Keith Shockley

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AND PEOPLE ON EARTH FALL IN LOVE WITH THIS STUFF?!?