

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

When I first got saved and began reading good material regarding the Bible, I found that Bible believers were writing about the "modernist" movement, a movement which consisted of a group of people who doubted the Bible, exalted intellectualism, compromised on standards, separation, soul winning, and the simple things of the faith. These were people I wanted to stay away from. I was saved into the world of Independent Baptists.

In the '60s and '70s, a new group called *Neo-Evangelicals* emerged. It was interesting that while *Independent Baptists* remained *Independent Baptists*, the *modernists* slipped off and joined the *neo-evangelicals* who became the new and exciting movement of the day. Their new philosophies were supposed to be what would reach the young generation. Their founders really knew what was going on, supposedly.

Although many jumped on this spiritual band wagon of the day, the Bible-believing, Independent Baptists of America kept obeying the Bible, kept getting people saved, kept teaching Sunday school, kept preaching it was wrong to drink booze, and kept telling folks to stay separate from the world.

You may find this hard to believe, but this neo-evangelical group did not last. (As if we could not have guessed that.) *Neo-Evangelicalism* actually consisted of nothing more than a modernist doctrine with a new title and sugarcoating: an old, deceitful doctrine with a new face. We may pursue a new car or new clothing; but we should not pursue new Biblical philosophies, **for Bible truth does not change.**

In the years that followed, the Neo-Evangelicals slowly began to fade, and a new, exciting movement hit America called the *charismatic* movement. Other than adding speaking in tongues to the agenda, this group of people was not very different from the modernist or the neo-evangelical. They did not fuss much about which Bible to read or about soul winning. They did not make a big deal about separation, standards, or any other really strong convictions. They just thought it was great to love everybody and speak in tongues because that was exciting! (Reading one's Bible, staying pure, winning souls, teaching Sunday school -- those were the same old things folks had been doing for years. New stuff is exciting!)

In the '60s another group came alongside the neo-evangelicals and charismatics. This group was founded by converts from the hippie movement. They brought their rock bands into church and their rebellion came with them too. They rebelled against the idea of wearing your "SUNDAY best" and traditional Bible-believing churches. These two groups paralleled each other merging often in philosophy and doctrine.

The tongues and charismatic movement soon became common or boring. Their leaders did their best to revitalize it. Stories surfaced of spirit-filled laughter, spirit-filled barking, and much more nonsense. This merger of the Pentecostal movement and the Neo-evangelical movement, now called charismatic, was really not much different than the others. Along with the fleshly emotionalism of speaking in tongues, rolling on the floor, barking, possessing the "gift of hilarity," the charismatic movement embraced rock music as the tool to reach the younger

generation. The world's rock music (once seriously condemned even by even the unsaved) brought with it more of the same: no changed life, no strong Bible convictions, an emphasis on love rather than on truth, and much of what was passed down from the modernist, new-evangelicals and others. During these years, the dressed-down, relaxed spirit came into being. People made comments such as, "We can worship God without showing off our fancy clothing."

Funny, how that through all this, the Baptists somehow managed to keep preaching the KJV, teaching separation from the world, standards, modesty, soul winning, and amazingly -- young people kept coming and surrendering to the ministry. How did they do it without the worldly ideas of the other crowd?

As the charismatic movement and the tongues movement began to wane, a new group was formed -- the contemporary church. (This is not an exhaustive list. Several other ideologies came and went along the way, the seeker sensitive movement being one of the short lived ones recently.)

Speaking in tongues, charismatic ideas, living worldly lifestyles, preaching against having any convictions, and following the pattern of prior years brought this Contemporary Church movement. Wow! This was new and exciting. But not really. It was the same old stuff with a new personality leading the way. While this change to the contemporary church was taking place, there was another group in America, the Baptists. These old-fashioned people continued to preach the Gospel, promote righteousness, separation, standards, and convictions. They went soul winning and continued to believe that the Bible was the Word of God. It is interesting that while movements changed and names of leaders and the movement itself were rearranged, the Baptists somehow managed to keep being Baptist. Oh, there were some Baptists who jumped on the "new stuff" band wagon, but there has always been a group that kept witnessing, kept reading their King James Bible, and kept believing in purity and holy living. This was the same stuff that had helped reach the world since the time of Christ.

Rock and roll music from the charismatic church, the lack of standards and convictions from the modernists, weak stands on any Bible truth, Neo-Evangelicals, and the charismatics, all these together gave us the contemporary church. A new addition of "Praise and Worship" was added. To anyone over 50, it was more like the nightclub and sensuous sound -- breathy female singers with colored spot lights sway with the sound and move the audience... Move them to *what* is the question? Nothing was really new at all. It is the same old fleshly stuff that had NOT changed the world since Chuck Smith, Keith Green, and "Love Song" of the '70s-'80s.

While the contemporary church played its worldly, nightclub music, had no standards, no convictions, no separation, no soul winning, or stand on the Word of God, there was another group in America called the Baptists. (It is peculiar how those Baptists keep hanging around and everyone says that they are not going to last or reach the next generation.) The most common thing each one of these groups said was: How do you expect to reach the young people with those kinds of beliefs? Modernists said it; Neo-evangelicals said it; charismatics said it; even the contemporary church and some soft Baptists said it. Isn't it odd how Baptists keep reaching young people to keep their church alive while other movements fade away? Hmmm. . . .

While the contemporary church is nothing more than the blending of all its predecessors, the Baptists somehow have managed to keep preaching the doctrines that they have always

preached: separation, standards, convictions, preaching (versus teaching,) soul winning, and believing that the Bible in their hand was the Word of God.

When the contemporary church movement is replaced, perhaps by the recently arisen emergent church or by some other new name, the Baptists will still be getting people saved; they will still be teaching Sunday school; they will still be soul winning, and they will still preach standards, separation, and convictions. When the new movement that comes along embraces all the ideals of the former groups and changes its name again, the Baptists will continue to be Baptists. When this new group finds its new "Robert Schuler" or "Joel Osteen," some unknown young man will still be starting a Baptist church. Baptist churches will be the same as they were in the '40s, '50s, or '60s: Bible-believing, soul winning, separated, Sunday school teaching, and meeting for Sunday night preaching services.

The new movement will criticize that new, unknown young man who has no finances, no charisma, and no building. He will probably meet in some pitiful tent or store front building. People will say, "How will you reach the young people with those old-fashioned values?" But the fact is, Baptists will keep reaching the young people in the future just as they have reached them in each prior generation; because ". . . strait is the gate, and narrow is the way. . ." Matthew 7:14.

If all these other groups did such a great job at reaching the young people, why do you not find anyone who claims to be a modernist ('40s-'50s)? Where can you find a Neo-Evangelical church, or even a charismatic church ('60s-'80s)? The contemporary church will give way to the emergent church or another group, but each new church is the same -- just under a new name. It is the devil's tool to try to get Christians to be worldly, to compromise on the Bible, standards, separation, and soul winning; and his ultimate goal is to defeat the Gospel. However, we found out a long time ago, the gates of Hell will not prevail against the church Jesus started. I will stay a Baptist.

Give me the old-time religion! It was good for Paul and Silas; it was good for our forefathers; and it is good enough for me! They may not be names you recognize, but our church today is just like Lee Roberson's, who started a Bible college in 1926, became pastor of Highland Park Baptist church in 1942 and stayed there until 1983 probably baptizing more converts and sending more people to the mission field than any other church in America. We could add to that list the great churches built by men like: Jack Hyles, Harold Sightler, Oliver B. Green, G.B. Vick, and dozens of others. Somehow it is still working in Wildomar and many other places around the nation. We are nothing new, we just found what worked and did not see reason to change.

Baptists are still here. Where are the new-evangelicals? Charismatics? HMMMMM.

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