

The Emerging Church Movement

CGYG Friday Program

July 15, 2005

The Emerging Church

■ References & Resources – Books

- D.A. Carson, ***Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church*** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005)
- M.J. Erickson et al., eds., ***Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times*** (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004)
- J.F. MacArthur, ***Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World*** (Wheaton: Crossway, 1993)
- I. Murray, ***Evangelicalism Divided: A Record of Crucial Change in the Years 1950 to 2000*** (Cambridge: Banner of Truth, 2000)
- I. Murray, ***The Forgotten Spurgeon***, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Banner of Truth, 1973)

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■ References & Resources – Articles

- Albert Mohler - articles at mohler.crosswalk.com
 - “What Should We Think About the Emerging Church?” - Parts 1 & 2, June 29-30, 2005
 - “Modernity’s Assault on Truth” - March 16, 2005
 - “Compromise and Confusion in the Churches” - March 10, 2005
 - “Truth-Telling is Stranger Than It Used to Be” - Parts 1-3, March 1-3, 2005
- Book reviews at www.9marks.com
 - M. Dever, “A Review of Brian McLaren’s A New Kind of Christian”
 - G. Gilbert, “The Church on the Other Side”
 - G. Gilbert, “The Younger Evangelicals”
- FOCUS magazine (at www.cmds-emas.ca)
 - F. Christian, “Across the Divide: Two Possible approaches to this new reality”, October 2004

The Emerging Church

■ What is the “Emerging Church”?

- A movement growing and developing (“emerging”?) within evangelical circles over the past 5-10 years
- A diverse movement, with a spectrum of beliefs and practice - and still in evolution

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■ What is the “Emerging Church”?

- A movement attempting to respond to and address current changes in culture, especially among the younger generation (aka “Younger Evangelicals”)
 - A reaction to / protest against perceived deficiencies in the way that more traditional evangelicals are “doing church”
 - E.g. book title by M. Yaconelli (editor): “***Stories of Emergence: Moving from Absolute to Authentic***” - a sense of lack of authenticity in traditional churches

“At the heart of the “movement”... lies the conviction that changes in the culture signal that a new church is “emerging”. Christian leaders must therefore adapt to this emerging church. Those who fail to do so are blind to the cultural accretions that hide the gospel behind forms of thought and modes of expression that no longer communicate with the new generation, the emerging generation.” -Carson, p.12

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■ What is the “Emerging Church”?

- A movement that largely rejects the ideas of *modernism*, while embracing *post-modernism* and application of post-modernist tenets in the church

“I realized that the modern-institutional-denominational church was permeated by values that are contradictory to the Church of Scripture. The very secular humanism the institutional church criticized pervaded the church ... The “legitimate” church, the one that had convinced me of my illegitimacy, was becoming the illegitimate church, fully embracing the values of modernity.” - M. Yaconelli, in *Stories of Emergence*, cited by Carson, p.20

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■ What is the “Emerging Church”?

- A movement that seems to be gaining steam within evangelical circles in Canada (and elsewhere)

“Our congregations reflect a broad variety of culture and traditions. Some are postmodern in thinking and methodology, others are very traditional.” - Baptist General Conference of Canada website (www.bgc.ca), accessed July 10, 2005

“Thank you for your comments... - - - you are right- - - there is a move to address post modernism in CMDS - - - several hundred of our newer members would view themselves as post-modernists. They are not challenging Orthodox Christianity - - - they are challenging the modernist packaging of Christianity.” - from e-mail correspondence with Christian Medical & Dental Society of Canada

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■ What is the “Emerging Church”?

- Key spokesmen have included, among others,

Brain McLaren - author of *A New Kind of Christian, A Generous Orthodoxy*, several other books

Robert Webber - author of *Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World*

Stanley Grenz - late theologian at Carey Theological College in Vancouver; author of *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era*

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■ Modernism & Post-Modernism

- A question of *Epistemology* – i.e. “how we know things, or think we know things” (Carson, p.27)
- Modernism - a worldview growing out of the Enlightenment
 - Believes in objective, universal truth (i.e. that is true for everyone, regardless of time & place)
 - E.g. water molecule is made of 2 hydrogen atoms and 1 oxygen atom, whether you're in Canada or Siberia

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■ Modernism & Post-Modernism

– Modernism

- Believes that this truth may be known by building on ‘foundational’ or self-evident truths
 - Don’t necessarily need God as the foundation (unlike pre-modern epistemology, which assumes that truth is necessarily founded on revelation by God) - e.g. evolution as a foundational ‘truth’
- Objective, universal truth could then be arrived at, or ‘found’, through rational thought/logic and the application of rigorous methods (e.g. scientific method, etc.)

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■ Modernism & Post-Modernism

– Modernism

- In its worst forms, sometimes fosters a certain absolutism or dogmatism, with arrogance and intolerance towards others who may not see things the same way
 - e.g. evolutionists' view of those who believe in Creation
 - focuses on having the right knowledge
 - lacks humility regarding the limitations of human knowledge

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■ Modernism & Post-Modernism

– Post-Modernism

- Dominant worldview in significant segments of North American society (esp. younger generation)
- Denies that objective, universal truths exist
- Rather, sees ‘truth’ as relative -- something that is culturally/socially constructed to the advantage of that particular group - i.e. truth is ‘made’, not ‘found’
 - Thus, no one person/society has a monopoly on truth; no single viewpoint can adequately account for reality
 - Rather, each person/group has a certain perspective on what is ‘true’

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■ Modernism & Post-Modernism

– Post-Modernism

- Rather, sees ‘truth’ as relative -- something that is culturally/socially constructed to the advantage of that particular group (continued)
 - No person/group can say that the viewpoint of another is wrong, because each person/group is limited by his own cultural conditioning (and thus, his own culturally constructed version of truth)
 - Instead, all perspectives must be embraced
 - No one person/group can lay claim to universal truth, since no one person/group can have universal knowledge (or experience of all viewpoints)

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■ Modernism & Post-Modernism

– Post-Modernism

- Similarly, words have no objective meaning -- they are just the tools used by groups to make their own ‘truth’ that forward their own interests and oppress others
- Thus, sees texts (such as Scripture, or the Constitution) as revealing oppressive intentions on the part of the author, and so must be “deconstructed”
 - Texts have no objective meaning - rather, are all subject to “interpretation” (and in any event, had oppressive intentions that should be rejected)
 - The meaning of the text is not determined by the author, but is created by the reader

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■ Modernism

- objective, universal truths exist
- truth may be found by starting with foundational truths, then applying rigorous methodology
- words have objective meaning
- meaning of text determined by the author (i.e. what the author intended to say)

■ Post-modernism

- objective, universal truth does not exist
- truth is not found, but is made by each person/group, to protect and forward its own interests
- words lack objective meaning
- meaning of text created by the reader's interpretation, not by the author

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■ Affirmations

– The Emerging Church movement

– Recognizes a real shift in the Western culture

- From modernist --> post-modernist worldview

– Recognizes the limitations imposed on our understanding of things by our background and by the fact that we are finite creatures

- We **DO** need to recognize our own 'blind spots' and be humble about them
- We **SHOULD** listen to other perspectives and try to understand them

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■ Affirmations

– The Emerging Church movement

- Identifies some real problems in some (many?) churches
 - ‘Dry’ or ‘lifeless’ orthodoxy - ‘head’ knowledge without corresponding ‘heart’ knowledge - lack of authenticity
 - Pressing for ‘truth’ without the necessary corresponding love
 - Dry preaching that sometimes doesn’t seem to have any relationship to real-life experience
 - Lack of emphasis on community within the Body of Christ
- Desires to more effectively reach those who may often be overlooked by the Church

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■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

1. *Embrace post-modernism (although some authors deny this) and apply its principles to the Church*

- I.e. address the problem of changes in the culture by changing to become like the culture - reach the world by becoming like the world
- First, do away with **labels** like 'conservative' or 'liberal', since labels are "inconsequential" and unhelpful, and words don't really have any objective meaning anyways
- Avoid speaking about objective, universal truths, and **label** Christians who do as 'modernists' who are out of touch, narrow-minded, and/or arrogant - not realizing that their view is only the limited perspective of one 'tribe'

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■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

1. *Embrace post-modernism (although some authors deny this) and apply its principles to the Church*

- Avoid speaking in certainties, since we are always bound to be incomplete or inadequate (due to our limited perspectives):

“When we ‘do theology,’ we are clay pots pondering the potter, kids pondering their father, ants discussing the elephant. At some level of profundity and accuracy, we are bound to be inadequate or incomplete all the time, in anything we say or think, considering our human limitations, including language, and God’s infinite greatness.” (B. McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003) p.65.

The Emerging Church

■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

1. *Embrace post-modernism (although some authors deny this) and apply its principles to the Church*

- Rather, embrace and celebrate all perspectives as facets of the Christian experience, even if some are contradictory
- E.g. Brian McLaren's book:

A Generous Orthodoxy: Why I am a missional, evangelical, post/protestant, liberal/conservative, mystical/poetic, biblical, charismatic/contemplative, fundamentalist/calvinist, anabaptist/anglican, methodist, catholic, green, incarnational, depressed-yet-hopeful, emergent, unfinished Christian

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■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

2. *Emphasize experience over doctrine or 'propositional truth'*

- “[S]ince the Christian message is fundamentally an invitation extended to human beings - not just human brains - to encounter the person of Jesus Christ rather than to adopt a doctrinal system or ideology, it is only obvious then that establishing the credibility and plausibility of that message will depend upon more than intellectual argument.” - from T. Philips and D. Okholm, eds. ***Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World*** (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), p.55 [as cited by Carson, p.66]

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■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

3. *Avoid or deflect questions of objective truth or objective standards*

“Can Christian theology make any claim to speak ‘objective’ truth in a context in which various communities offer diverse paradigms, each of which is ultimately theological?... [Such questions are] ***both improper and ultimately unhelpful.***” (emphasis added) S. Grenz, *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), p.245 [as cited by Carson, pp. 130-131]

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■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

3. Avoid questions of objective truth or objective standards

e.g. consider this recent exchange of e-mails between a CGYG member and the editor of a Christian magazine about some questionable (post-modernist) writings in the magazine:

[Editor]: “Dear ____, I’ve been meaning to write to you for some time, but have been extremely busy these last few days. I do not take what you say in your letter to be directed against me personally... I realize you have issues which are very important to you and in my view, should be important to the whole [organizational] body....Could I also make a personal plea to you please join us on this exciting journey by contributing to ____ magazine, ***by making your concerns known, by criticizing us if you believe we need correction***; and most of all, by praying for us...” (emphasis added)

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■ Concerns

3. *Avoid questions of objective truth or objective standards*

[Member]: “Dear ____, Thank you for your response. Thank you for recognizing that what I am saying is nothing personal. Nevertheless, I still maintain that your teaching is dangerous and wrong... I feel that in all of your responses to your critics, you do not acknowledge that there are differences. You say that you agree with everything that the other person is saying and then go on to talk about how much you love Jesus, your brothers and sisters... ***I ask you to be consistent and to openly debate about the specific issues that you yourself bring up in your articles...*** I will be more specific... [goes on to list a number of specific concerns]... You suggest that... good and sincere Hindus or Muslims will be saved... Do we have differing definitions as to what faith in Christ means?... ***I ask you to provide an answer to this specific challenge.*** Why do you insist on promoting other religions as valid ways to God?...” [emphasis added]

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■ Concerns

3. *Avoid questions of objective truth or objective standards*

[Editor]: “Dear ____, Thank you for this letter. ***I shall not be entering into a doctrinal inquisition with you.*** What I have said in my letter to you and elsewhere is very clear. Only a very biased reader would infer I am promoting “other religions.” I promote Christ only and Christ crucified and shall continue to do so.” [emphasis added]

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■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

4. *Since truth is relative, accept other religions and don't pass judgment on them, but rather, learn from them*

“Zen Buddhism... says little about cosmic history and purpose as do Judaism and Christianity... Western Christianity has... said relatively little about mindfulness and meditative practices, about which Zen Buddhism has said much. To talk about different things is not to contradict one another; it is, rather, to have much to offer one another, on occasion at least. ” - B. McLaren, ***A Generous Orthodoxy*** (El Cajon, CA: emergentYS / Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), p.255 (as cited by Carson, p.134)

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■ Concerns

– The Emerging Church movement's solution:

4. Since truth is relative, accept other religions and don't pass judgment on them, but rather, learn from them

“Mahatma Gandhi was the first leader to put Christ's teachings of “love thy enemy” to work on a massive political and social scale and freely admitted his indebtedness to Christ and the New Testament, and to Buddhism and the Gita as well... was Mahatma Gandhi's life a “Christian” life - perhaps more “Christian” than our own? We are not saved by works, but only by the blood of Jesus - but the saving is administered by God and not by us. Can we then pronounce Gandhi as being non-Christian?... We acknowledge truths in many places, including unexpected places - in our “non-Christian” friends, in the Koran, in the Gita. And we are confident and enthusiastic in acknowledging these truths, because we know that they all point to Him who is the Truth... There is then no divide. No angry denunciation. No bigoted stereotyping. Only wonder, at Grace amazing.” - F. Christian, in “Across the Divide”, FOCUS magazine (a publication of Christian Medical & Dental Society of Canada), October 2004, p.17.

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

1. *EC's criticisms of "traditional evangelicals" tend to be based on fairly narrow (ungenerous?) stereotypes of evangelicals*

– Lots of false and/or manipulative antitheses:

- *either* you know truth omnisciently *or* you can at best have only one small part of the truth that is distorted by your background
- *either* you're "absolute" *or* you're authentic
- *either* you relate to "human brains" *or* you relate to "human beings"
- *either* you're doctrinal *or* you're loving/relational
- *either* Christianity is about a set of doctrines *or* it's about a relationship to Jesus Christ

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

1. *EC's criticisms of "traditional evangelicals" tend to be based on fairly narrow stereotypes of evangelicals*

- There seems to be no sense that one can be **both** doctrinal **and** relational, that one can take a strong stand for truth **while living** an authentic Christian life
- Implies that those who care about matters of truth and doctrine are **by necessity** dry, unloving, insincere, hypocritical, etc. and that they cannot have authentic relationships, either with God, or with brothers & sisters in Christ

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

1. *EC's criticisms of "traditional evangelicals" tend to be based on fairly narrow stereotypes of evangelicals*

- Seem to insist that they alone among evangelicals have a monopoly on authentic Christian living:
 - E.g. consider the following description of “emerging evangelicals” (in contrast to “traditional” and “pragmatic” evangelicals) by a church associated with the movement:

“[Emerging evangelicals] Mostly are contemporary in their thinking and approach to ministry, including an emphasis on worship, both traditional hymns and contemporary music, active participation, authentic relationships, and reaching out to their communities.” - Carson, p.39

Sound familiar? Does this make CGC an “emergent church”?

- No acknowledgement that believers can care about doctrine AND share in these concerns

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■ Critique

2. For all its sound and fury, the Emerging Church movement is really nothing new

- At it's core, really just another attempt to try to bring the values and thinking of the world into the Church
- Striking similarities to the modernist/liberal movement within the church in the 19th-20th centuries, which
 - Sought to make Christianity more relevant by integrating latest thinking in science, philosophy and literary criticism
 - Downplayed the importance of doctrine, believing doctrine to be divisive - and a fragmented church would be irrelevant
 - Sought a “progressive orthodoxy” (cf. Emerging Church’s “generous orthodoxy”)

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

2. For all its sound and fury, the Emerging Church movement is really nothing new

– Similarities to the modernist/liberal movement, which

- Emphasized brotherhood and authentic experience, while de-emphasizing doctrinal differences

“The modernist very often prides himself on the supposition that he is concerned with life, with the principles of conduct and the making operative of the principles of Jesus in all departments of life, individual, social, ecclesiastical, industrial, and political. His slogan has been that Christianity is life, not doctrine, and he thinks that the orthodox Christian or fundamentalist, as he likes to name him, is concerned simply with the conservation and perpetuation of outworn dogmas of doctrinal belief, a concern which makes orthodoxy in his esteem a cold and lifeless petrification of Christianity.” - John Murray, 1935 (cited in J. MacArthur, *Ashamed of the Gospel* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1993), p. xv.

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

2. *For all its sound and fury, the Emerging Church movement is really nothing new*

– Similarities to the modernist/liberal movement

“To-day there are two parties in the churches, They are active in controversy now, and every day their consciousness of difference becomes more sharp and clear. The crux of their conflict lies at this point: one party thinks that the essence of Christianity is its original mental framework; the other party is convinced that the essence of Christianity is its abiding experiences.” - Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1924 (a chief spokesman for liberalism in the early 1900s); quoted in I. Murray, *Evangelicalism Divided* (Cambridge: Banner of Truth, 2000), p. 15.

“Yet liberal theology very rarely presented itself as being in opposition to Scripture. On the contrary, its exponents claimed the authority of the New Testament for the view that Christianity is life, not doctrine.” Ibid., p.12.

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■ Critique

2. For all its sound and fury, the Emerging Church movement is really nothing new

- Similarities to the modernist/liberal movement, which
 - Attacked Christians who oppose the movement as out of date, unloving, Pharisees --> e.g. public censure of Charles Spurgeon
 - Started as a movement to try to make Christianity more relevant to the modern world, but ultimately resulted in the denial of everything supernatural and of virtually every doctrine central to the Christian faith, e.g. the Atonement, the Resurrection, etc.
 - Resulted in the liberal mainline Protestant denominations that today are denying the Deity of Christ, ordaining homosexual ministers/bishops, etc.
 - Today's evangelical churches (including the AGC!) are descended from those who opposed the modernist/liberal movement

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■ Critique

3. The post-modern worldview is fundamentally incompatible with the Biblical worldview

- The Bible constantly affirms the existence and critical importance of objective, universal truths (i.e. that are true for everyone)
 - Truth rooted not in people or groups of people, but in revelation by God Himself
 - People are finite / limited by their backgrounds, but God is omniscient and reveals truth
 - People will be judged for suppressing and rejecting God's revealed truth
- Bible affirms that we can know these truths with certainty (and will be responsible for them), even if we don't understand them exhaustively

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

3. *The post-modern worldview is fundamentally incompatible with the Biblical worldview*

Just a very few Scriptural references:

“Sanctify them by ***the truth***; Your [i.e. God’s] word is ***truth***.” (John 17:17)

“They perished because they refused to love ***the truth*** and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed ***the truth*** but have delighted in wickedness.” (2 Thess 2:10-12)

“I do not write to you because you ***do not know the truth***, but because ***you do know it*** and because ***no lie comes from the truth***. Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Messiah.” (1 John 2:21-22)

“I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may ***know the certainty*** of the things you have been taught.” (Luke 1:3-4)

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

3. The post-modern worldview is fundamentally incompatible with the Biblical worldview

- The truth revealed in the Bible is not just one human perspective of many, but God's Word
 - "...for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." (John 18:37b)
- Christians are to be a people who defend and proclaim this truth unapologetically
 - "What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you - guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us." (2 Tim 1:13-14)

The Emerging Church

■ Critique

3. *The post-modern worldview is fundamentally incompatible with the Biblical worldview*

- According to Scripture, other religions are not just ‘other perspectives’ that we ought to learn from, but are, in reality, manifestations of rebellion against God’s revealed truth that are to be opposed (e.g. Rom 1:18-23)
 - God’s commands to Israel to destroy the gods of the land of Canaan and to have nothing to do with them in the OT
 - Paul in Athens (after quoting a Greek poet): “In the past, God overlooked such ignorance, but now He **commands all people everywhere** to repent. For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the man He has appointed...” [A universal truth!] (Acts 17:30-31a)

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■ A Christian response

- Understand that the Bible is not just the perspective of one small tribe of men, but the authoritative Word of God
 - “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God, as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Pet 1:20-21)
- Because God has revealed His truth in the Scriptures (and ultimately in Christ), understand that we CAN know and articulate truth with certainty, even though we are not omniscient - so don’t be ashamed to do it!
 - To say that we cannot know this truth objectively is a **false humility** that rejects God’s revelation

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■ A Christian response

- Therefore, realize and live with conviction the reality that the answer to the questions and challenges posed by a changing world is not to conform to the pattern of the world, but to be continually transformed by the renewing of our minds, through the living and enduring Word of God (Romans 12:2, with 1 Peter 1:23)

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■ A Christian response

- Understand that because God is the one God over all men, His truth applies to all men (Acts 17:24-31), even though men may try to suppress and rebel against that truth (Romans 1:18-32)
- Recognize that the truths of the Gospel have always been - and always will be - ‘a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles’ (1 Cor 1:23) , and ‘foolishness to those who are perishing’ (1 Cor 1:18)
 - Be careful about trying to make it more ‘palatable’ or ‘relevant’ by injecting our own “words of very limited!!! *human wisdom*, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.” (1 Cor 1:17)

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■ A Christian response

- Therefore, resist and refute the tendency towards religious pluralism
- Proclaim unapologetically that Jesus Christ IS the only way to God

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” (John 14:6)

“I [Jesus] told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.” (John 8:24)

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■ A Christian response

- Study the Scriptures so you will know the truth and be able to defend it well (but with gentleness and respect!)

“He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others **by sound doctrine** and refute those who oppose it.” (Titus 1:9)

“Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading to **a knowledge of the truth...**” (2 Tim 2:25)

The Emerging Church

■ A Christian response

BUT

- Remember, as the EC reminds us, that following Christ is not ultimately just about believing the right things or holding the right doctrine - necessary as that is - but about living all of life to the glory of God, within the Body of Christ

“...speaking the ***truth*** in ***love***...” (Eph 4:15)

“Watch your ***life*** and your ***doctrine*** closely. Persevere in ***them*** [i.e. ***both*** life ***and*** doctrine] because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” (1 Tim 4:16)

Concluding thoughts

Modern (Post-modern?) Heresies

- Know the Scriptures and learn to apply them to every situation
 - The best way to spot a counterfeit is to know the real thing
 - “But solid food is for the mature, who ***by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.***” (Hebrews 5:14)
- Know Church history
 - ‘New’ heresies are often just rehashes of old ones (sometimes ***very*** old ones)
 - **Open theism** - elements of Socinianism
 - **Emerging church** - striking similarities to modernist/fundamentalist controversy of late 1800s and early 1900s

Concluding thoughts

Modern (Post-modern?) Heresies

- Resist the temptation to dilute the truths of God's Word with worldly wisdom in order to make it more 'palatable' or 'relevant', as this empties the cross of Christ of its power
 - ***Open theism*** - tries to make God more palatable by re-making Him in Man's image
 - ***Emerging Church*** - tries to make Christianity more palatable by re-making it to be just like the world

"If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." (John 15:19)

"For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel - not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power."
(1 Cor 1:17)

Concluding thoughts

Modern (Post-modern?) Heresies

■ Stay on the narrow road

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and *many* enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and *only a few* find it.” (Matthew 7:13-14)

- Don't be led astray by those who try to widen the gate or broaden the road, for these ways lead ultimately to destruction

Concluding thoughts

Modern (Post-modern?) Heresies

“It is as much a crime to disturb the peace when truth prevails as it is to keep the peace when truth is violated. There is therefore a time in which peace is justified and another time when it is not justifiable. For it is written that there is a time for peace and a time for war and it is the law of truth that distinguishes the two. But at no time is there a time for truth and a time for error, for it is written that God’s truth shall abide forever. That is why Christ has said that He has come to bring peace and at the same time that He has come to bring the sword. But He does not say that He has come to bring both the truth and falsehood.”

Blaise Pascal, as quoted by Albert Mohler in “Modernity’s Assault on Truth” at mohler.crosswalk.com, March 16, 2005

Concluding thoughts

Modern (Post-modern?) Heresies

“It is today as it was in the Reformers’ days. Decision is needed. Here is the day for the man, where is the man for the day? We who have had the gospel passed to us by martyr hands dare not trifle with it, nor sit by and hear it denied by traitors, who pretend to love it, but inwardly abhor every line of it... Look you, sirs, there are ages yet to come. If the Lord does not speedily appear, there will come another generation, and another, and all these generations will be tainted and injured if we are not faithful to God and to His truth today. We have come to a turning-point in the road. If we turn to the right, mayhap our children and our children’s children will go that way; but if we turn to the left, generations yet unborn will curse our names for having been unfaithful to God and to His Word.”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 1888, cited by I. Murray in ***The Forgotten Spurgeon***, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Banner of Truth, 1973), p.192.