

News and Current Events :: Americans Ready for Serious Gospel in Postmodern Era

Americans Ready for Serious Gospel in Postmodern Era - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/3/14 19:21

Americans Ready for Serious Gospel in Postmodern Era

"What happened with the evangelical church that we are losing our theological center?" posed a distinguished professor of theology.

"I actually think that what is happening today is that you have a new amalgamation taking place between the older liberalism and parts of the evangelical world and it is coming together in what people are calling the 'emerging church,'" said Dr. David Wells, Andrew Mutch Distinguished Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, on Coral Ridge Ministries' Truths that Transform broadcast.

Liberalism, which has now waned, assumed that there was no alienation between the life of culture and the presence of God, according to Wells. Early critics of the movement have said, "It's a message that a god without wrath brought man without sin into a kingdom without judgment through Christ without a cross," Wells explained on the Monday broadcast.

The movement challenging churches today concerns postmoderns who do not believe in truth and the emerging church, mentioned Wells, author of *Above All Earthly Powers: Christ in a Postmodern World*.

Scot McKnight, professor of religious studies at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago, Ill., points to co-authors Edie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger to define emerging.

"Emerging churches are communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures," they state in their book *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures*. This encompasses nine practices that include: transform the secular realm, live highly communal lives, welcome the stranger and take part in spiritual activities.

Wells believes the emerging church has the "marketing ethos that has characterized parts of the evangelical world." However, the theology moving into the emerging church reminds him of the Protestant liberalism of decades ago. Some emerging liberals, Wells said, dispute Christ's penal substitution, which maintains that Christ died on the cross as a substitute for sinners. They also have "great openness" to homosexuality and refuse to condemn it on ethical grounds.

"What you have is this - in the emerging church - as if it were a fresh incarnation of some of the liberal ideas with the marketing ethos so that this is coming together in a kind of 'product' which is now being pitched to Gen X's," Wells said in the broadcast.

Younger generations are looking for something deeper, as many emerging church leaders say. And Wells believes people today are ready to hear a "serious and faithful rendering of the gospel."

In a postmodern era and especially in a religiously diverse country, churches must affirm two central Christian principles at the minimum, Wells noted. One, the principle that Scripture is the sole authority in all matters of faith and conduct; and two, Christ's death and that humans can do absolutely nothing to bring them closer to being accepted by God. It's only by grace and by faith that people receive the gift from the cross, explained the author.

"I just wish that we could present to the world a more serious and a more wholesome kind of church life where we really did take the truth of God with greater seriousness."

Re: Americans Ready for Serious Gospel in Postmodern Era - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/3/14 19:24

Quote:

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-----the truth of God with greater seriousness

I believe the "emerging church" is not at all the solution to this problem and people are going to go to Churches where the truth of God is proclaimed. Where the wrath and judgment of God is proclaimed. And where the Power and Sovereignty of God are proclaimed.