

Articles and Sermons :: The New Dark Ages - Rob Dreher

The New Dark Ages - Rob Dreher - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/11 8:12

Too many of our churches function as secular entertainment centers with religious morals slapped on top, when they should be functioning as the living breathing Body of Christ. Too many churches have succumbed to modernity, rejecting the wisdom of past ages, treating worship as a consumer activity, and allowing parishioners to function as unaccountable, atomized members. The sad truth is, when the world sees us, it often fails to see anything different from nonbelievers. Christians often talk about "reaching the culture" without realizing that, having no distinct Christian culture of their own, they have been co-opted by the secular culture they wish to evangelize. Without a substantial Christian culture, it's no wonder that our children are forgetting what it means to be Christian, and no surprise that we are not bringing in new converts.

If today's churches are to survive the new Dark Ages, they must stop "being normal." We will need to commit ourselves more deeply to our faith, and we will need to do that in ways that seem odd to contemporary eyes. By rediscovering the past, recovering liturgical worship and asceticism, centering our lives on the church community, and tightening church discipline, we will, by God's grace, again become the peculiar people we should always have been. The fruits of this focus on Christian formation will result not only in stronger Christians but in a new evangelism as the salt recovers its savor.

Re: The New Dark Ages - Rob Dreher, on: 2017/4/11 10:38

I found his book very insightful, especially the first half. He then seems to expound the virtues of orthodoxy (he is an ex-catholic who is now Greek orthodox)

I think this book can be helpful in understanding the state of Christianity, especially in the west, but the answers he suggests would set the Church, if Christ tarried for another thousand years, down the same path that saw the birth of Catholicism in the first place.

Have you read the whole book Greg or did you find this above quote and post it?bro Frank

Re: The New Dark Ages - Rob Dreher, on: 2017/4/11 10:51

On page 103, the very next page from your quote, the author writes.....

"We need to be instructed in how to pray and worship to train our minds to think in an authentically Christian way. As Paul exhorted the Romans, we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds by adopting thought patterns and behaviors that are not actually natural to us. This is not bondage but liberty."

Now this quote is not given in a vacuum. The previous chapter was all about the virtues of Benedictin monks. The thrust of where he is coming from is legalism indeed for the prayers that he speaks of above are prayers of those who have come before. He gives examples of written prayers repeated at specific points throughout the day. This is what he means when he quotes Paul by "being transformed by the renewing of our minds."bro Frank

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/4/11 10:58

Quote:

-----Have you read the whole book Greg or did you find this above quote and post it?bro Frank

Brother Frank,

I have not read the book, I just found the quote and agreed with it as these terms came to me before, ie evangelism is in a Dark Ages and that there is a need to re-discover the roots of the faith, part of this is liturgy and older statements of belief

ief. I believe the awhole is adrift in the waters of private opinion of scripture.

I will take a look at the whole book as you shared there is value you found in it.

Re: , on: 2017/4/11 11:03

We need the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Unless the Spirit is in the transforming and renewing of our minds than everything else is of the flesh.

Simply my thoughts.

Bro Blaine

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/4/11 11:34

RE : ///..., ie evangelism is in a Dark Ages and that there is a need to re-discover the roots of the faith, part of this is liturgy and older statements of belief. I believe the awhole is adrift in the waters of private opinion of scripture.///

The roots of the Faith are contained in the Inspired Scriptures and anything out side of it, Is but traditions of man. the Scriptures clearly teach us that traditions of man make the Word of God of none effect.

The original dark ages did not come about because men where reading the Scriptures for themselves!

It came about because hierarchy suppressed the Scriptures and interpreted them for the people.

The chains of the Dark Ages where broke when men started reading and believing the Scriptures for themselves.

William Tyndale lost his life so that the uneducated ignorant plow boy such as myself could read the Scriptures for our selves.

The return of the Dark ages is happening (Not because men are reading the Scriptures for themselves) But because men have an increasingly weak view of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

add : "an increasingly"

Re: , on: 2017/4/12 3:16

There are several things that are not from Scripture, let me share just two of them:

Quote: "the salt recovers its savor"

Matthew 5v13 You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its savor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men..."

Quote: "there is a need to re-discover the roots of the faith, part of this is liturgy and older statements of belief."

We don't have "roots" we have a "foundation" - extremely important !

Ephesians 2v19: Therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens of the saints and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone.

1 Corinthians 3v10 "By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise master builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one must be careful how he builds. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2017/4/12 3:26

"For no one can lay a foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Amen!

Re: , on: 2017/4/12 15:21

Pastor Andrew Roberts of the Free Church in Dundee offers a critique of this book. Here is just one small part of it, but helpful to see the legalism in much of what the author writes.....

"â€œWhat we think does not matter as much as what we do â€œ and how faithfully we do it.â€œ

I think this quote is profoundly mistaken, not recognising the absolute direct connection between what we think and what we do. There is a danger that this attitude disconnects the mind from the body in a way that is spiritually unhealthy.

Likewise the following quote is theologically and spiritually unhelpful.

â€œRight belief (orthodoxy) is essential, but holding the correct doctrines in your mind as you little good if your heart â€œ the seat of the will â€œ remains unconverted. That requires putting those right beliefs into action through right practice (or thopraxy), which over time achieves the goal also for Timothy when he commanded him to â€œdiscipline yourself for the purpose of godlinessâ€œ (1Timothy 4:7).

Perhaps it is badly written, but what this suggests is that in order to be converted we need to do the right things. Surely Scripture teaches that we do the right things because we are converted, not in order to be converted? Although I would fully endorse what Dreher says about spiritual discipline, it seems to me that he is one step away from a form of legalism which can do a great deal of harm.