

THE FRUIT OF COMPROMISE

The New and Young Evangelicals

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CONTENTS

1. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT	7
The Rise of Modernism.....	7
The Rise of Fundamentalism.....	8
The Reaction to Fundamentalism	10
The Rise of the Young Evangelicals.....	12
2. LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW AND YOUNG EVANGELICALS ...	13
Some General Characteristics	13
Some Doctrinal Tendencies	15
3. AN EVALUATION OF THE NEW AND YOUNG EVANGELICALS	33
As Regards Doctrine	33
As Regards Outreach.....	35
As Regards Separation.....	37
As Regards Inspiration and Biblical Interpretation	38
As Regards the Christian View of Science.....	38
As Regards the Role of Women	40
Summary	40
4. DIRECTION FOR FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANS.....	41
Courageous Leadership Is Needed	41
Proper, Balanced Instruction Must Be Given	42
Enlightening Information Must Be Made Available	42
Decisive Action Must Be Taken.....	42
Conclusion	43

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT CONFUSION REIGNS TODAY within Christendom! There are the ecumenicists with their insistent call to repentance over the divisions within the Church. There are the social revolutionaries who use the Church as a springboard to effect what they feel are social improvements within society. There are the charismatics who proclaim the recovery of long-lost spiritual gifts. And, there are the new and the young evangelicals, the one the product of the other, both seeking to escape contamination from the embarrassing spectre of fundamentalism.

Centuries ago the inspired apostle warned that believers should not be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine . . .” (Eph. 4:14). The figure of the wind implies the constantly shifting character of false doctrine. No sooner has one discovered the origin of the breeze than it has shifted directions and increased in intensity. So it is with the teachings of men. In one generation it is modernism that threatens, in another neo-orthodoxy, and in another a different system of error.

The movements examined on these pages are perhaps among the most subtle of all. This is true because their advocates give allegiance to the authority of the Bible and profess belief in cardinal doctrines such as the deity of Christ, His vicarious substitution, and His saving power. They evangelize and promote world-wide missionary effort. They call themselves “evangelical,” a term used historically to denote those who accept Biblical authority as over against those who reject or question it. Many of them have developed reputations as spokesmen for Bible-believers. Yet within their systems of thought are concepts foreign to the Scriptures and extremely dangerous to individual believers and to churches.

Who are the new evangelicals and the young evangelicals? Where did they come from? What do they believe? What harm, if any, is to be found in their teachings?

1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

MANY CHRISTIANS ARE WOEFULLY IGNORANT of church history, a fact which makes them susceptible to sundry movements and teachings which are anti-Biblical and whose counterparts have appeared in other times.

The Rise of Modernism

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Church became infected by various forms of unbelief. English Deism, French naturalism, and German rationalism began to make gradual inroads into the professing Church, particularly into its educational institutions. Learned men began to declare that all that claimed to be divine revelation must be squared with human reason, and that, if it was not reasonable, it was not valid. Rather than accepting the Bible as humble Christians had accepted it for centuries, as the Word of God, fully inspired and authoritative, these exalters of human intellect began to subject the Scriptures to irreverent, rationalistic, and critical examination. Their studies led them to the conclusion that Jesus Christ was neither God nor was He born of a virgin. They declared that miracles were impossible. Christianity was merely one way of seeking to know God and its premises were no better than those of others. Man was not divinely created, but evolved from lower forms of life. He was not a sinner, but was simply in ignorance of certain vital matters. His ignorance would be dispelled by proper education. There was no need of repentance and no divine operation such as the new birth.

These Satanic doctrines, and many companion ones, leaped the Atlantic Ocean and infected church-related colleges and theological seminaries in the United States. A system of thought called "Unitarianism" arose early in Europe, surfaced in England around the 1770's, and began to become prominent in the United States about that same time. Unitarians denied the doctrine of the Trinity and the deity of Christ. They approached Christianity from a rationalistic rather than a Biblical viewpoint. In his most informative book, *The Leaven of the*

Sadducees (long out of print), Ernest Gordon, former editor of the *Sunday School Times*, traced the rise of Unitarian unbelief among the Congregational churches of New England where the old-time gospel of the Puritans had been preached, but where unbelief began to flourish. Harvard College was taken over by Christ-deniers in violation of ethical principles and in a definite breach of trust with those who founded the school.

Old foundations established by the Pilgrim Fathers for the perpetuation and teaching of their views in theology were seized upon and appropriated to the support of opposing views. A fund given for preaching an annual lecture on the Trinity was employed for preaching an annual attack upon it . . . (Mrs. H. B. Stowe, *Autobiography of Lyman Beecher*, II, 110).

Modern religious liberalism with its denial of the supernatural and its rejection of historic Christian doctrine grew apace. It captured great citadels of learning, and began to permeate the denominational structures. Ministers and professors of theology openly flaunted their skepticism and liberal views. The position of religious humanism which they represented became known as “modernism.”

The Rise of Fundamentalism

As the influence of the modernists began to grow, Bible-believing saints became alarmed. They were witnessing the gradual deterioration of their beloved denominations and the spread of anti-Biblical teachings. Their natural reaction was to go back to the Book—the Holy Book of God—the Bible. Toward the end of the nineteenth century opponents of the new teachings of modernism began to gather in great Bible conferences in various parts of the land. Noted preachers and Bible teachers spoke to large throngs representing many various denominations. Many of these conferences were prophetic in nature though all stressed the great fundamental doctrines of the Word of God. The messages given warned against false doctrine and exhorted people to remain true to the faith of their fathers. These Bible conferences formed rallying points for Bible-believing Christians and had a significant influence in combating the growth of religious liberalism.

Shortly after the beginning of the twentieth century opposition to the liberal trends became even more pronounced. Dwight L. Moody became famous in the latter half of the 1800's as a large-scale evangelist, and other men such as Billy Sunday, Bob Jones, R. A. Torrey followed in his train. While their ministries were not totally dedicated to the repudiation of liberalism they did speak out strongly against it.

Some men early saw the need for schools that would train young men and women in the truths of God's Word rather than in the vagaries of rationalism. A. J. Gordon, a well-known pastor in Boston, organized the Boston Missionary Training School, later known as Gordon Bible College and now called by the name, Gordon College. Shortly after that, in 1902, William B. Riley, pastor of First Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, founded the Northwestern Bible School to train men and women who would carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. A. B. Simpson opened a small Christian and Missionary Alliance Bible School in New York and some others did likewise in various places. Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, was, in its earlier years, a staunch defender of the faith. The Moody Bible Institute came into being to provide Christian training, particularly for those who were going to be vocational servants of God.

In 1909 two businessmen in California sponsored the publication of a series of booklets entitled *The Fundamentals* (since republished in two volumes). Noted conservative leaders authored these articles, defending the great doctrines of Scripture such as Biblical inspiration, the deity of Christ, the new birth, etc. Quickly the name "fundamentalist" was born and was attached to all who believed the doctrines propounded in these little books. The battle lines were drawn more definitely. Those who rejected all or many of "the fundamentals" were known as "modernists" or "liberals." Sermons, booklets, and full-scale books began to appear by writers on both sides of the fence. A warfare which reached into many of the leading denominations was underway.

By the 1920's, liberals had captured many places of leadership in the old-line denominations (Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc.). They were skilled in ecclesiastical politics and often had prestigious and monied people behind them. Within the old Northern Baptist Convention (now the American Baptist Churches) a struggle was waged by the fundamentalists. One of the first churches to withdraw from the Convention in protest over its liberalism was the historic Wealthy Street Baptist Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, then pastored by Dr. Oliver Van Osdel. This occurred in 1909 and in the next few years a number of others followed suit. These churches formed the Michigan Orthodox Baptist Association, a local forerunner of the national fellowship known as the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches.

In the 1920's, however, few Baptist leaders within the old Northern Baptist Convention were ready to sever their ties. They went to successive Convention meetings, organized their forces, and sought to wrest control from the liberals and to establish the Convention on a firm Biblical footing. They failed. They were outmaneuvered and began increasingly to realize that their struggle was in vain. Some obeyed the Scriptural injunction and separated themselves. These, meeting in 1932

in Chicago, voted to change the name (and nature) of Baptist Bible Union, the organization under which they had been fighting the battle within the Convention, to the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. This body continues to stand for the faith to this day with some 1500 churches in its ranks. Another group chose to remain with the Convention while contesting for the evangelical faith. They organized the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society (1943) and the Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society (1950). In 1947 the Conservative Baptist Association was formed with which local churches could vote to fellowship whether they were still in the old Convention or whether they had withdrawn.

Meanwhile within the Presbyterian Church in the USA (Northern Presbyterian) a theological conflict of great magnitude was fought. Much of it centered around Princeton Seminary where intellectual and spiritual giants such as J. Gresham Machen combated the encroachments of liberalism. Liberal and compromising leaders within the denomination finally overcame them and so they withdrew to form a new seminary (Westminster) and a new mission board (Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions). Shortly thereafter Carl McIntire led a split with this group and formed Faith Theological Seminary.

Because of their weaker theology and the further inroads liberalism had made into their ranks there was never as strong a protest within the Methodist Church. However, some courageous souls such as Robert Shuler, pastor in California, raised their voices against the unbelief within Methodism. Sadly, Shuler allowed his church to remain within the Methodist denomination.

As a result of the conflict between fundamentalism and liberalism many new enterprises were born. A number of new schools came into being. A host of independent mission boards sprang up and became sending agencies for Bible-believing missionaries who refused to go out under liberal denominational boards.

The Reaction to Fundamentalism

The fundamentalist movement began to solidify with the growth and maturation of its schools, mission boards, church associations, and independent congregations. As often happens there began to arise within it those who were unhappy with some of its beliefs and characteristics. Part of their distaste for fundamentalism was created because of the high-handed tactics, belligerent attitudes, and distasteful antics of *some* fundamentalist leaders. Certain of the more flamboyant fundamentalist leaders were involved in escapades and undertakings that were repugnant to many (even those who agreed with them theologically). Younger men, especially those of more refined and scholarly temperament, became disgusted with some of these “goings on.”

Unfortunately, instead of rejecting the bad tactics and attitudes and maintaining the faith of Scripture, they “threw out the baby with the bath water,” and began backpedaling on basic Scriptural truths.

Some younger fundamentalist scholars, in search of academic prestige, enrolled for graduate work at citadels of unbelief, where, along with their Ph.D.’s, they received generous doses of anti-Biblical theology not all of which they were able to slough off. Their thinking was colored by that to which they had been exposed, and they began to become restless with the “old-time” faith of their fathers. One of them, Carl Henry, authored a book entitled *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, one of the earliest pronouncements of what was later to be called the “new evangelicalism.” Henry perceived the fundamentalist conscience as “uneasy” because it promoted an “individualistic” approach to the work of the Church and neglected any social responsibility. This was to become one of the notes that new evangelicals would sound.

In March of 1956 the magazine *Christian Life* published some interviews with evangelical leaders who spoke to the question, “Is Evangelical Theology Changing?” They agreed that it was. Among those consulted were Dr. Vernon Grounds of the Conservative Baptist Seminary in Denver, Edward Carnell of Fuller Theological Seminary, and Bernard Ramm, then teaching at Baylor University. They said that evangelical theology was becoming more friendly to science, more open toward views concerning the work of the Holy Spirit such as the concept of the gift of tongues, and less dispensational. From approximately that time until the present the movement known as the “new evangelicalism” has continued to grow. It appears that the term “new evangelical” was coined by a Boston pastor, Harold Ockenga, who used it to differentiate his position from that of fundamentalism.

Also in 1956 a new magazine, *Christianity Today*, was born which has become the accepted voice of the new evangelicalism. Carl Henry became its editor and had a wide influence in promoting the views of the new evangelicals. In early issues two significant articles appeared. One was entitled, “Beyond the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy,” and the other, “Dare We Renew the Controversy?” The essence of them was that we should no longer expend valuable time and energy in fighting old battles, but we should move on to more positive and fruitful efforts.

The cause of new evangelicalism has been greatly strengthened by the contribution of Fuller Theological Seminary in California. Here have been centered many of the principal and scholarly proponents of the new position. In more recent years the school has undergone some wrenching disagreements over certain doctrinal matters, but it continues to be a bastion for the new evangelical position. One of its former presidents, Edward Carnell, blasted the fundamentalist position in his

book, *The Case for Orthodox Theology*.

The Rise of the Young Evangelicals

In the last few years a group of younger men and women have arisen out of the ranks of the new evangelicals and are calling themselves the “young evangelicals.” This term has been popularized through a book by Richard Quebedeaux, *The Young Evangelicals*. These young people are disenchanted with some things about what they call “establishment evangelicalism” (new evangelicalism), and are seeking to update it. They tend to be considerably more radical in a number of areas than the new evangelicals. They are political activists (of a liberal variety), and are social activists as well. To the extent that their views prevail in Christian circles the professing Church will be carried further from Biblical truth.

Who are some of these young evangelicals? While not all might necessarily accept the appellation there are a number who hold the views that have come to be associated with “young evangelicalism.” Joe Roos who is one such leader came to the fore as connected with the People’s Christian Coalition, a group promoting liberal political views. Leighton Ford, Billy Graham’s brother-in-law, is another. He came to national prominence as one of Graham’s associate evangelists. A popular evangelist and spokesman for this position is Tom Skinner, a former Harlem gang leader. One author who would be claimed by young evangelicals would be Bruce Larson, who, among other things, has produced an “enlightened” view of sex for Christians in his book *Ask Me To Dance*. Some women have become well-known as young evangelicals, among them Nancy Hardesty who has written books and articles from her position as a professor at Trinity College, a school connected with the Evangelical Free Church of America. We have already referred to Richard Quebedeaux who has authored a definitive work on the subject.

What are the views of the new and young evangelicals, what impact have they had upon the Church, and what should be our attitude toward them? These questions remain to be investigated.

2 LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW AND YOUNG EVANGELICALS

ONE MUST REALIZE THAT WITHIN ANY MOVEMENT there are differences of opinion and of emphasis. So it is within the ranks of the new and young evangelicals. For years within the new evangelicalism there has existed a “right wing” (more conservative) and a “left wing” (more liberal). Some elements of the “left wing” have now begun to develop into the movement known as “young evangelicalism.” The characteristics mentioned here are some which it is felt are representative of the movements as a whole, but may not necessarily be applied equally to every individual within those movements.

Some General Characteristics

Antagonism toward Fundamentalism

Certainly the new evangelicals have exhibited an antagonism toward fundamentalism from their very inception. This is not to say that all new evangelicals are boorish persons. Many of them can be very gracious. However, their stance toward fundamentalism is one of general antagonism. One of their number declared that fundamentalist mentality is “rigid, intolerant, and doctrinaire,” and fundamentalism is “orthodoxy gone cultic” (Edward Carnell, *The Case for Orthodox Theology*, pp. 114, 113). One must remember that included within such descriptions would be great warriors of the faith who were and are unabashedly fundamentalists, such as James M. Gray, J. Gresham Machen, Henry Morris, John Whitcomb, and a host of others.

Fraternization with Heretics

It would seem fair to declare that this brand of evangelical is definitely open to theological interaction with those of unorthodox views. Rather than, in Christian grace but firmness, refusing to have fellowship with those who deny the historic Christian faith, these evangelicals welcome opportunities to “rap” with them, not with the

thought of boldly and clearly repudiating what they say which is contrary to Scripture, but with the intent of “learning” from them. Dr. Vernon Grounds stated, “An evangelical can be organizationally separated from all Christ-denying fellowship and yet profitably engage in an exchange of ideas with men who are not evangelicals” (“Is Evangelical Theology Changing?” *Christian Life*, March 1956, p. 19). Dr. Alva McClain, great defender of the faith and then President of Grace Theological Seminary, answered Grounds in this fashion:

Does anyone really think we might “profitably engage in an exchange of ideas” with blasphemers who suggest that our only Lord and Master was begotten in the womb of a fallen mother by a German mercenary and that the God of the Old Testament is a dirty bully? Basically, the problem here is ethical rather than theological. We must never for one instant forget that they are deadly enemies with whom there can be neither truce nor compromise (*King’s Business*, January, 1957).

No sooner had the new evangelicalism begun to appear as an identifiable entity than it was promoting a theological elasticity which was alarming to Biblical loyalists. Its early proponents were suggesting the need for a “reinvestigation” of the “whole subject of Biblical inspiration” (*Christian Life*, March 1956). (The matter has been thoroughly “reinvestigated” by some new evangelical scholars, to such an extent that now, 20 years later, they have rejected the historic Christian doctrine of an infallible, inerrant Bible). The theology of Karl Barth, an opponent of Biblical truth, was hailed by one writer as a “religious springtime after the long, cold winter of Liberalism” (*Christianity Today*, October 13, 1956, p. 22).

Accommodation to Secular Learning

Also rather prominent in the outlook of new evangelicals has been a continuing attempt somehow to make evangelical theology more acceptable to unbelieving scholars, and to dovetail, where possible, Biblical theology and interpretation with the findings and theories of secular educators, particularly in the area of science. One of the earliest major efforts of this kind was put forth by Bernard Ramm in his book, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*. In this volume Ramm considered a number of theories in various areas of scientific thought and attempted to show how they could possibly be reconciled with what he considered to be the teaching of Scripture. Since that early book by Ramm, many others have made similar attempts, operating under the thesis that the Bible must somehow be squared with the latest secular

theories in a given area of investigation. Dr. John Whitcomb, noted scholar, describes their efforts as “startling concessions to modern theories of organic evolution and geologic uniformitarianism, at the expense of a consistent historical-grammatical interpretation of the first eleven chapters of Genesis” (unpublished lecture notes).

Opposition to Biblical Separation

New evangelicals (and young evangelicals) have bitterly opposed the Scriptural principle of separation from false doctrine and those who teach it. Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, who in the latter years of his ministry made a number of significant changes in his convictions and approach, wrote this as a guideline for preachers:

Many a young minister in his first pastorate has said, “There is a ministerial union in this town, but So-and-so belongs; he’s a modernist, so we who believe the truth will form our own ministerial union.” Such an attitude is divisive. There must be the desire in the heart of every Christian to work with others when possible. True, we can never see 100 per cent eye to eye with any group . . . However, that should not preclude his being a member and working with them, helping them whenever he can (*Eternity*, March 1957).

A more recent article (in the same magazine as quoted above) was entitled “On Not Leaving It to the Liberals” (*Eternity*, February 1977). The concept emphasized was the fact that rather than abandoning the old-line denominations to the liberals, true believers should remain in them, get active in some evangelical organization within the denomination, and seek to change things. Dr. L. Nelson Bell defended his continued presence in the Presbyterian Church by stating that “the greatest field for Christian witnessing today is within the Church” and that the “doctrine of separation can lead people to abandon the opportunity for witness where it is most greatly needed” (“On Separation,” *Christianity Today*, October 8, 1971, p. 26). It never seemed to occur to Dr. Bell to consider the question of which has the priority—witnessing or obedience to the Word of God in a vital doctrinal matter. We cannot effectively witness for God while we are in disobedience to God.

Some Doctrinal Tendencies

In doctrinal matters there are wide divergences between new and young evangelicals. However, there are some observable tendencies which can be noted among them.

The Inspiration of the Bible

It became apparent to careful observers early in the history of the new evangelicalism that there were inherent weaknesses in the approach of some of them to the doctrine of Scripture. Dewey Beegle authored a book which expressed the thought of many new evangelicals. He unashamedly said, “We need to remind ourselves that the verbal plenary formulation of inspiration is after all, only a doctrine—a non-Biblical doctrine at that” (*The Inspiration of Scripture*, p. 187). When Beegle authored this book (1963) his position—that the Bible was authoritative but errant—was not nearly as popular as it has grown to be today. Billy Graham did not help matters any when a few years ago he wrote, “I do not believe that the ground of fellowship is to be the inerrancy of Scripture, but, rather, the ground of our fellowship is to be the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ” (included in a message by Dr. Billy Graham entitled, “On Separation”). Dr. Graham has apparently forgotten that the only reliable testimony we have to Christ’s deity is in an infallible Bible.

In recent days even more dramatic departures from the historic doctrine of verbal, plenary inspiration have been witnessed. Paul King Jewett, a long-time faculty member at Fuller Theological Seminary, has authored a book entitled *Man As Male and Female*. In it he discusses, among other things, the subordinate role of the female to the male. He concludes that Paul was a victim of his culture and erred in making some of the statements he made concerning female subordination. Jewett still believes the Bible can be authoritative upon believers though it contains errors.

With his thorough-going discussion of the current deviations from the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, Harold Lindsell has created consternation within the ranks of new evangelicals. His book, *The Battle for the Bible*, clearly shows that many so-called “evangelicals” have jettisoned the doctrine of inerrancy and openly state that the Bible contains errors. He has an entire chapter on “The Strange Case of Fuller Theological Seminary” in which he details the internal struggles of the faculty there over the question of Biblical inspiration, and cites examples of those faculty members who do not believe in Biblical infallibility. (Lindsell was one of the original faculty members at Fuller.) The Seminary, openly exposed in this fashion, has replied to Lindsell’s charges in a special magazine entitled “The Authority of Scripture at Fuller.” To evaluate properly what is written in this magazine requires theological training and considerable discernment. The document makes clear the fact that Fuller Seminary does *not* hold to the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy (infallibility) *as this has historically been understood among Bible-believing Christians*. The writers endeavor to redefine the terms. The sum of their defense is this: the Bible is infallible in matters of

faith and practice, but contains various errors (some of them prefer the term “inconsistencies”) in matters of “lesser importance.” For instance, one of their writers declares: “Speaking for myself . . . the opposite of ‘inerrancy’ is to stress the total infallibility of the Bible in all matters of religious faith and practice and to make no attempt to define the Bible in other matters except to say that it is remarkably reliable and accurate” (William LaSor, “Life Under Tension,” in “The Authority of Scripture at Fuller,” p. 23). We would remind Dr. LaSor that there is considerable difference between the Bible being “remarkably reliable and accurate” and being “infallible” (inerrant). The same writer says later, “There is in my mind a clear difference between saying that the Bible is entirely without error in all that it teaches, and in saying that the Bible is without error in all matters (such as geology, astronomy, genealogy, figures, etc.) when these matters are not essential to the teaching of the context” (Ibid., p. 27). The concept of LaSor and others is that the Bible is infallible when it “teaches” us some doctrine or truth, but when it speaks of other matters such as geology, etc., it is not “teaching” and therefore may not be inerrant. It should be pointed out that some of these men have rejected Biblical inerrancy for years and have continued to hold faculty positions and other places of leadership among Christians. It reflects a very serious condition in the professing Church. To call into question the absolute infallibility of God’s Holy Word is a high crime and worthy of public censure. Too long some evangelicals have tried to cover up such matters on the grounds of “Christian love” or with the plea of “maintaining unity.”

It should be noted that there is a division among the new evangelicals over this matter. Harold Lindsell, the author of the book above-mentioned, is a new evangelical leader and editor of *Christianity Today*. He is now found on the “right wing” of the movement, defending the inerrancy of Scripture whereas occupants of its “left wing” are espousing an opposite viewpoint.

The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students states its position on the Scriptures as follows: “Scripture is entirely trustworthy in the sense that its message conveys the true knowledge of God and His works, especially the way of salvation . . . (*Christianity Today*, September 24, 1971, p. 46). Note that the statement makes the Scripture “trustworthy” but not “infallible.” Note also that its trustworthy character is revealed more especially in the doctrine of salvation as though this doctrine could be isolated from the totality of Scriptural teaching. This is a typical new evangelical attitude toward Scripture.

On the other hand, a leading new evangelical scholar has written an illuminating analysis of the present conflict over Biblical inspiration and says, in part:

Yet a growing vanguard of young graduates of evangelical colleges who hold doctorates from non-evangelical divinity centers now question or disown inerrancy and the doctrine is held less consistently by evangelical faculties . . . Some retain the term and reassure supportive constituencies but nonetheless stretch the term's meaning (Carl Henry, "Conflict Over Bible Inerrancy," *Christianity Today*, May 7, 1976, p. 24).

Another writer gives similar testimony to the nature of the controversy that rages among evangelicals.

A surprising array of equally dedicated evangelicals is forming to insist that acceptance of historic Christian doctrines does not require belief in an inerrant book. This latter group maintains that where "inerrancy" refers to what the Holy Spirit is saying through Biblical writers, the word is rightly used; but to go beyond this in defining inerrancy is to suggest "a precision alien to the minds of the Bible writers, and their own use of Scriptures," as one statement put it. What has made it a new ball game today is the emergence of a new type of evangelical. These persons accept the cardinal doctrines of Christianity in their full and literal meaning but agree that the higher critics have a point: there are errors in Scripture, and some of its precepts must be recognized as being culturally and historically conditioned ("Is God As Good As His Word?" G. Aiken Taylor, *Christianity Today*, February 4, 1977, p. 2).

Plainly the evangelical world is in disarray over its beliefs about the Bible. Thankfully, there are still many Christian leaders, institutions, and saints who have not "bowed the knee to Baal" and steadfastly maintain the historic (and correct) view of an infallible Bible.

One leading "young evangelical" puts it this way:

This position—affirming that Scripture is inerrant or infallible in its teaching on matters of faith and conduct but not necessarily in all its assertions concerning history and the cosmos—is gradually becoming ascendant among the most highly respected evangelical theologians (Richard Quebedeaux, "The Evangelicals: New Trends and Tensions," *Christianity and Crisis*, September 20, 1976, p. 198).

The Evolutionary Viewpoint

Ever since Darwin propounded the theory of evolution in his *The Origin of Species* unsaved men have seized upon it as a marvelous way in which to explain the universe and all that is in it without recourse to a sovereign God. For many years Bible-believing Christians have stood resolutely against the theory of evolution as completely contrary to the teachings of the Bible and as subversive of the entire Christian faith. In the original volumes of *The Fundamentals* (from which the name “fundamentalism” derived) Professor George Frederick Wright of Oberlin College wrote:

The widely current doctrine of evolution which we are now compelled to combat is one which practically eliminates God from the whole creative process, and relegates man to the tender mercies of a mechanical universe, the wheels of whose machinery are left to move on without any immediate divine direction (“The Passing of Evolution,” *The Fundamentals for Today*, II, 559).

This viewpoint has been held by most true Christians until fairly recent days. Now many evangelicals are adopting some form of evolutionary thought as a part of their system. In evaluating new evangelical thought one writes thusly:

The new evangelicals hold to “progressive creationism” (Carnell terms it “threshold evolution”). The term “progressive creationism” is a good one. It is progressive in that it denies instantaneous creation and fixity of species . . . The new evangelical apologist believes that this view fits the scientific data quite well . . . Ramm and Carnell have both indicated that theistic evolution is not totally contradictory to the Biblical account (Millard Erickson, *The New Evangelical Theology*, pp. 160–161).

What is the position of the “young evangelicals” on matters of science as related to the Bible? These “green-grass” evangelicals (as one has denominated them) take no strong stand as did our fundamentalist forefathers. “Green-grass evangelicals think that the whole Christianity-and-science bit, including the controversy over evolution, is not really where the action is. Having had science one way or another from the earliest grades through college, they have the feeling that science is here to stay. Why buck it? (Bernard Ramm, “Welcome ‘Green-Grass Evangelicals’,” *Eternity*, March 1974, p. 13).

A popular position on the first few chapters of Genesis is to say that they teach us theological truth but not scientific truth. By saying this non-literalists are able to force these chapters into whatever theory of origins they may hold. "Biblical scholars have long known that the first eleven chapters of Genesis are theological, not scientific, information" (Jack Rogers, *Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical*, p. 126). But, an eminent scientist has expressed a contrary and (we believe) a true viewpoint: "In the final analysis, all truth is one. God did not create one universe of physical reality and another of spiritual reality. The same God created all things, and His Word was given by His Holy Spirit to guide us into *all* truth" (Henry Morris, "The Bible Is a Textbook of Science," *Studies in the Bible and Science*, p. 120).

The new evangelicals have made the mistake of trying to fit the facts of Scripture into many of the passing theories of secular science. Rather the Bible must be viewed as the supreme authority which sits in judgment upon all other "authorities."

Dispensationalism

Large numbers of fundamental Christians hold to the system of Biblical interpretation known as "dispensationalism." Basically, dispensationalists recognize the distinctions of Scripture between the nation Israel and the Church, apply the literal principle of interpretation to the prophetic portions of Scripture, and believe that Christ will reign for a thousand years upon this earth. This approach has been popularized in the Scofield Bible.

For the most part new evangelicals have little good to say about dispensationalism. Edward Carnell years ago began the assault by declaring that dispensationalists replaced "the spirit of the gospel with the spirit of Old Testament Judaism" (*The Case for Orthodox Theology*, p. 64). Other new evangelical writers characterize dispensationalism as "a very antinaturalistic and antiprogressive scheme of history . . ." (David Wells and John Woodbridge, *The Evangelicals*, p. 125).

Social Action

Some years ago in setting forth the purposes of the new evangelicalism Harold Ockenga wrote, "(4) Finally, evangelicals want to make Christianity the mainspring in societal reforms that it once was and that it ought to be" ("Resurgent Evangelical Leadership," *Christianity Today*, October 10, 1960, p. 13). This note of evangelical social involvement has been prominent in new evangelical thought and has become even more so among the young evangelicals.

The nub of their case is simply this: fundamentalists have emphasized an individual gospel, concentrating on the salvation of persons to the neglect of the social implications of the gospel. Mark

Hatfield, Oregon Senator and a lay leader of new evangelical thought, declares that current preachers should “hear a call for the ‘kingdom of God’ to be furthered on earth” and should be concerned “about the problems of war, poverty, and social injustice” (“The Total Minister,” *Eternity*, September 1975). One of the young evangelicals describes himself as “a professional social activist” and another announces that he is “turned off” by traditional orthodoxy, but “the things that turn us on are social action things” (“A Conversation With Young Evangelicals,” *Post-American*, January 1975, p. 7).

More and more radical views regarding social involvement are proceeding from professedly evangelical sources. Professor Wells, a teacher at Calvin College, sees the responsibility of the Church to be “leaven for society” and justifies the young evangelicals for “joining the liberals in causes of social concern” (“Where My Generation Parts Company,” *Eternity*, May 1970). These contemporary evangelicals have gone so far that many of them are now claiming that the call to social action is actually part of the gospel of Christ. Mark Hatfield beseeches us to “turn to the theological problems of social revolution in the present. To do less is to concern ourselves with only half of the gospel” (Mark Hatfield, *Conflict and Conscience*, p. 25). To defend from the New Testament the concept that social action *is included in the saving gospel of Christ* would be an impossible task. The essence of the gospel is clearly given us by Paul—“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3–4). While anyone who has the Spirit of God within would be, and should be, concerned about the plight of needy persons, to say that the mission of the Church is to alleviate their miseries is to hold a position which cannot be supported from the New Testament. A study of evangelical movements that have devoted themselves primarily to the remedy of social ills discloses the fact that they drift further and further from the true mission of the Church—the preaching of personal salvation to all men. Neither Christ nor the apostles mounted any organized effort for social action within the Roman Empire. They did not do so because this is not God’s program for this age. Failure to involve one’s self in such programs does not mean that one is heartless or unfeeling for the needs of suffering humanity. It simply means that priority must be placed where the Lord places it—upon the spiritual needs of men.

The Place of Women

There has arisen among the new and young evangelicals a kind of a “religious women’s libbers” movement. Such women as Nancy Hardesty; Sharon Gallagher, editor of “Right On”; and Lucille Sider Dayton are among these. Richard Quebedeaux declares, “That woman is inferior to

man is an established doctrine in most Fundamentalist and Evangelical churches” (*The Young Evangelicals*, p. 112). This is a completely erroneous statement, deliberately colored by the word “inferior.” The writer knows of no Bible-believing Christians who hold the woman to be “inferior.” There is a distinct difference between a woman being “inferior” and a woman being “submissive.” The first word implies some lack of character or deficiency of ability whereas the latter word involves a glad and willing response to the Word of God and its instructions concerning women. Articles are appearing from evangelicals pleading for the ordination of women to the gospel ministry (cf. “Women As Preachers: Evangelical Precedents,” *Christianity Today*, May 25, 1975; and in the same magazine “Why I Favor the Ordination of Women,” Paul King Jewett, June 6, 1975). Jewett’s position basically is that the Pauline instructions in Ephesians and elsewhere concerning women were simply reflections of the culture Paul lived in and do not constitute divine directives for us today.

If there is anything plainer in Scripture than the fact that women do not qualify to be preachers, we cannot imagine what it would be. There were no female apostles. There were no female pastors or preachers mentioned in the New Testament. Certainly the picture given in both I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9 is that of a man occupying the position of the preacher and teacher of God’s Word. To say anything else is to clearly contradict the inspired Scriptures.

Ecclesiastical Viewpoints

What are the views of new and young evangelicals regarding the Church, particularly the purity of the Church and its relationship to modern ecumenism?

As has already been seen, many new and young evangelicals are committed to a philosophy of *infiltration* into apostate denominations rather than *separation* from them. There are some who are simply finding fellowship in unaffiliated churches or groups. There is considerable emphasis among them on seeking to bear witness within the “old line” denominations. Some on the other hand do not feel “infiltration” is the “in” thing anymore.

Billy Graham has helped to popularize the “infiltration” approach by featuring pastors and other leaders within the apostate denominations in his crusades, and by sending the names of those who have made decisions in his campaigns to pastors and churches that do not believe the Bible. Donald Grey Barnhouse declared that separation “doesn’t mean come out from the Presbyterian Church or the Baptist Church” (*Eternity*, March 1957, p. 42). His position (and others follow him in it) was that a large percentage of the Lord’s people were in old-line denominations so he was going to remain in and feed them from the

Word of God. A more current version of this same position was articulated in the article, "On Not Leaving It to the Liberals" (*Eternity*, February 1977, pp. 24 ff.). This was a report on various evangelical renewal organizations that are operating within the mainline denominations. One of the contributors, Tom Howard, professor of English at Gordon College, declares that "the church needs something more than earnest individuals with their New Testaments in hand" so he has opted for the Episcopal Church with its bishops who are the "appointed successors to the apostles" and its "liturgical, sacramental life" (*Eternity*, February 1977, p. 16).

Perhaps the general attitude of the new evangelicalism is best summarized in this fashion: "The new evangelicalism is less sharply separatistic than its forerunner, fundamentalism . . . the new evangelicals advocate remaining within the parent denomination unless it has become completely apostate. Here the conservative may exert a leavening influence, may engage in theological dialogue with his more liberal counterpart" (Millard Erickson, *The New Evangelical Theology*, p. 203). As we have seen both the older and the young evangelicals have antipathy toward dispensationalism, and one of their strongest objections to it is rooted in its doctrine of "the *apostate* nature of Christendom" (Richard Quebedeaux, *The Young Evangelicals*, p. 79). The same author goes on to despair of dispensationalism as being "pessimistic in outlook" and "separatist by nature" (p. 80).

Not all new and young evangelicals are charismatic. However, some are, and others, while not charismatics themselves are favorable to them and defend them. The spirit of the recent charismatic movement militates against Scriptural separation from false doctrine and promotes a wide fellowship across denominational barriers.

As we have said already, Charismatic Renewal participants understand the Pentecostal experience as transcending denominational and ideological walls while it clarifies and underscores what is authentically Christian in each tradition without demanding structural or even doctrinal changes in any church body. They are usually friendly in their attitude toward the World Council of Churches, its regional counterparts, and other ecumenical structures (Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics*, p. 153).

One of the biggest problems to pastors seeking to maintain Scriptural separation for their churches has been the ecumenical evangelism of Dr. Billy Graham and others who in more recent years have followed his example. In general, his practice has been to seek the active cooperation of as many churches in a given area as possible regardless of their doctrinal stance. When concern began to be voiced by Bible-believers over the liberal sponsorship of his first New York City Crusade, Dr. Graham, in a speech before the National Association of

Evangelicals, stated concerning that Crusade, "First, as to its sponsorship, I would like to make myself quite clear. I intend to go anywhere, sponsored by anybody, to preach the gospel of Christ, if there are no strings attached to my message." His activities since that time have indicated that he meant what he said.

Because of Dr. Graham's appealing personality and his wide contacts and ministry, he has been a major influence in promoting the cause of the new evangelicalism, particularly among lay people who cannot understand why anyone would be opposed to such a charming gentleman and gospel preacher. Yet the father of the new evangelicalism, Dr. Harold Ockenga, now president of Gordon-Conwell Seminary, said years ago, "Evangelist Billy Graham . . . is the spokesman of the convictions and ideas of the new evangelicalism" (Associated Press, 12/8/57).

Under the influence of Billy Graham, pastors and churches that traditionally have stood opposed to fellowship or cooperation with theological liberals have been united with them in evangelistic crusades in major metropolitan areas. Thus the witness of sound churches has been watered down, many churches have been beset by internal strife, and countless numbers of Christians have become confused. Basically, the position of Dr. Graham has been defended by his supporters through an appeal to the fact that people are being saved, thus whatever method is being employed must be acceptable to the Lord. It is the principle of "the end justifies the means."

In more recent years Dr. Graham has engaged in various ecumenical efforts. He received an honorary degree from Belmont Abbey College, a Roman Catholic institution. He has been a fraternal visitor on several occasions to the World and National Council of Churches meetings. He was a key speaker for the National Council of Churches a few years ago in their triennial assembly. He has openly fellowshiped with, and honored at his crusades, some of the most blatant unbelieving religious leaders of the day. He has probably done as much as any single man to promote the cause of new evangelicalism in the United States and other countries. It is with extreme sadness and not with glee that these facts are noted.

Approach to Education

The new evangelicals have emphasized the necessity of higher education, and many of the formulators of the new evangelical philosophy have been themselves educators. However, they have a general antipathy toward what some have called "the Bible institute mentality." New evangelicals in general have little appreciation for Bible institutes. To them such an education is not relevant. They are strong on the liberal arts. In a book authored by three professors of Wheaton

College a specimen of this outlook toward Bible teaching in fundamentalist institutions is found. On evaluating the Bible departments of fundamental institutes and colleges the writer declares:

Doctrine was taught from the perspective of learning or “memorizing” dogmatic statements. A myriad of verses, chosen for their value as supportive of doctrinal truths, were collected for the purpose of “proving” the inspiration of Scripture, the deity of Christ, and substitutionary atonement, and other fundamental truths.

Thus the student, having spent four years in an atmosphere charged with piety, where he was trained to “smell out” the liberal and armed with the answers to the biblical and theological critics, was sent forth by the Bible department as a specimen of an educated Christian.

When the final evaluation of the fundamentalist movement is made, the role played by the Bible department in the growth and solidification of evangelicalism will probably be assessed as phenomenal. However, historians may rightly ask whether a true biblical Christianity or a culturally conditioned Christianity has been promoted (Robert Webber, “Reshaping Theological Education in a Liberal Arts Setting,” *Reshaping Evangelical Higher Education*, p. 172).

Certainly no informed person would declare that fundamental Bible institutes and colleges have offered a perfect education. There have been weaknesses and there need to be improvements. But the attitude of current evangelicals toward a dogmatic presentation of Scriptural truth is to be lamented. Such an attitude has produced an increasing weakness toward biblical matters in institutions that at one time were solid in this area.

The concept many have today is that of a “smorgasbord” approach to the Christian faith. The professor is to spread out before the student all available options and opinions and the student is to take his choice among them. This is conceived of by some as a “liberal” education, developing the students’ own thought processes and thus making him a “mature” person. This writer was lecturing in a certain evangelical theological seminary a few years ago. After the lecture the professor of theology, a noted author, was asked what system of eschatology he taught. He smiled and said, “I teach them all. When I complete my course in eschatology the students do not even know what my personal position is.” This was viewed as a tremendous accomplishment of “broad-minded,” evangelical education.

Attitudes toward Student Regulations

Student regulations come under heavy attack by many evangelicals today. One has put it this way:

The old-fashioned Bible institute is as outmoded as high button shoes. It ought to be retired to the conservative religious museum . . . it is geared to training workers to perpetuate the myth of a Nicolaitan and legalistic local church structure unrecognized in the Word of God. We attempt to keep the saints in line and keep them from sinning by imposing and enforcing external regulations. The Bible clearly teaches that external regulations and enforcement lead only to further sin (Bruce Morgan, Winterhill Center for the Study of Christian Dynamics).

In an evangelical magazine a small, Presbyterian-related college was lauded as an example of the new, “open,” and “progressive” approach to student regulations. The director of student development calls their system the “process model” (meaning that faculty and students are engaged in a “process” of making decisions about dorm and student life). “The process model is not an attempt to continue the parental role by enforcing behavioral standards or limitations. . . We try to process it in the dorm so that we come up with a life-style that fits all who live there, so that everyone has a chance to express his uniqueness or his individuality . . . By not presenting itself as a conservative parent-substitute, the college does not delay the development of maturity and responsibility in young Christians” (David Erb, “Freedom in the Dorm—How Much?” *Eternity*, March 1974, p. 70). In a newspaper interview the vice-president of the college was quoted as saying that the school has an emphasis on “absolute freedom for the student.” The article continues by stating that the college has scrapped “all the ‘Mickey Mouse’ rules of student life.” (David Anderson, “Whitworth College: All Black Ink Now,” *The Muskegon Chronicle*, 5/18/74).

Political Involvement

Early new evangelicals were strong on the necessity of “social involvement,” but many of them were not particularly active in the political arena. This is one area where the “young evangelicals” have grown dissatisfied with their elders and have rebuked them. They lament the connection they see between conservative Christianity and a conservative brand of politics (a case expounded in Richard Pierard’s book, *The Unequal Yoke: Evangelical Christianity and Political Conservatism*). According to these zealous exponents of a new

evangelical theology, conservative Christians (and particularly fundamentalists) have been reactionaries in the political struggle, failing to fight for women's rights, black liberation, higher wages, and numerous other causes. A group called "The People's Christian Coalition" was formed in 1971, many of its original members being students at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. They advocate a theology of "Christian radicalism" which includes the espousal of liberal political causes and the attempt to wed the Christian message to a "prophetic" denunciation of various alleged societal evils. The young evangelicals complain that "Fundamentalists and Evangelicals prefer to treat the symptoms of poverty with benevolence rather than to seek its cure with corporate political action" (Richard Quebedeaux, *The Young Evangelicals*, p. 127). Most young, and many new evangelicals lean distinctly leftward in their political stance. Many of them supported George McGovern in his unsuccessful try for the Presidency. "The trend leftward among younger evangelicals has continued unabated . . ." (Richard Quebedeaux, "The Evangelicals: New Trends and Tensions," *Christianity and Crisis*, September 20, 1976). Their position is that evangelicals must organize in order to have "political clout" and influence society for the better.

Personal Separation

As in other areas, there would exist differences of opinion among new and young evangelicals concerning sexual behavior. A typical approach to the question of sex is made by Lewis Smedes, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, in his book *Sex for Christians*. Smedes takes a very loose view in many areas compared to that commonly received in fundamental churches. In one chapter on "Responsible Petting" he defends the concept of petting as a "delicately tuned means of mutual discovery" (p. 151). Petting is acceptable as long as the participants are "responsible."

The young evangelicals in particular advocate a much freer life-style and a much more condescending attitude toward certain practices than Bible-believing Christians have historically allowed.

A third major change in contemporary evangelicalism has occurred in its cultural attitudes. Separated from the wider culture by a simple and individualistic Christian ethic characteristic of modern revivalism, the righteous life for evangelicals was most often marked by a platitudinous legalism. Smoking, drinking, dancing, theatre-going and gambling, for instance, were disallowed. Reacting against what they consider oppressive legalism, younger evangelicals have almost universally rejected these taboos as binding; and the use of four-letter words, even, is readily apparent at times

in their conversation and writing . . . It is also clear that with upward social mobility and cultural accommodation, evangelicalism as a whole—even some of the more conservative evangelical churches, colleges, seminaries, and campus ministries—no longer spends much time condemning the older distinctive taboos that have now become socially dysfunctional, drinking in particular (Richard Quebedeaux, “The Evangelicals: New Trends and Tensions,” *Christianity and Crisis*, September 20, 1976).

An older evangelical decries the fundamentalist who “takes an absolute stand against dancing” and by so doing “outrages the natural instincts of the body.” He states further, “Though David danced before the Lord (2 Sam. 6:14), the fundamentalist will not” (Edward J. Carnell, *The Case for Orthodox Theology*, p. 124).

World Missions

Many new evangelicals have a great concern for world missions. Some of them have done some thoughtful and helpful work in the general area of missiology. However, their general principles have been carried over into this aspect of the Lord’s work as well. For instance, a number of years ago Kenneth Strachan, then director of the Latin American Mission, conceived the notion of what was called “Evangelism-in-Depth.” The idea basically was to gather as many churches and groups in Latin America as would cooperate in a given area and mobilize them for “in-depth” evangelism in their city or community. People and churches of all various persuasions and theological viewpoints participated with little regard to whether or not they were orthodox in their views. The same concept has been followed under other names and in different places.

There has been a notable increase in recent years in the cooperation between some missions and mission leaders and the World Council of Churches. In the magazine published by World Vision there appeared an article defending Paul Rees’ participation in the World Council meeting at Uppsala, Sweden. The point was made that since there are evangelical men within the World Council it is our responsibility as evangelicals to cooperate with them and to seek to strengthen their testimony within that apostate organization (“World Vision,” October 1968).

Several key meetings and congresses have been held by new evangelicals, which have centered around world evangelism. One of these was the “International Congress on World Evangelization” which was largely the result of Dr. Billy Graham’s vision, and which met in Lausanne, Switzerland in July 1974. It has been noted that “two-fifths of the evangelicals who came to Lausanne presently belong to churches

which are members of the World Council of Churches,” and Billy Graham, when queried as to whether the World Council would be receptive to the type of evangelism represented in the Congress, declared that he has always had “warm relationships” with the World Council of Churches (John Millheim, “A Consortium of Compromise,” *The Baptist Bulletin*, October 1974). Here were evangelicals planning how to reach a lost world for Christ while many of them had never obeyed the fundamental command of Scripture to separate themselves from apostasy such as that represented in the World Council. Henri Blocher, who gave some key messages on “The Nature of Biblical Unity” at the Lausanne conference, did not face at all the whole question of apostasy from the truth and how it should affect our fellowship and unity (cf. pp. 380 ff., J. D. Douglas, editor, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*). To seek to promote a cooperative world evangelism without attention to that fundamental question is folly.

Many young evangelicals are frank to express their desire to work more closely with theological liberals, not only in missions, but elsewhere. One sees as a bright spot on the horizon “the increasing convergence of values and priorities held by Evangelicals (the emerging generation, at least) and those espoused in principle by mainstream Ecumenical Liberals. This convergence can be illustrated by comparing the priorities and values of the Young Evangelicals with the goals established already in 1948 by the founding Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches (Richard Quebedeaux, *The Young Evangelicals*, pp. 138–39).

Some mission agencies that are respected by many evangelical Christians have fallen prey to new evangelical philosophies. Russell Hitt, in an article basically favorable to new evangelical missions, writes:

When several countries of Latin America have engaged in Evangelism-in-Depth campaigns, Roman Catholic priests have offered to cooperate in the effort. This is confusing to the older North American missionaries. Wycliffe Bible Translators serve as one of the organizations that has faced the missionary challenge in a similar way to LAM (Latin American Mission). Both of these works have been sharply criticized. The more conservative and traditional evangelical missions affiliated with LAM in the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association . . . question “cooperative” evangelism. By this they mean cooperation with Pentecostals, Roman Catholics or main line denominations (“The Latin American Experiment,” *Eternity*, November 1975, p. 17).

Certainly someone should question such ecumenical activities as those engaged by such missions as Wycliffe Bible Translators or Latin American Mission. Too long believers have supported missions and missionaries who do not take a forthright stand on the burning question of separation from the apostasy. Currently, there are two main associations of missions through which evangelicals channel their missionary funds. One is the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (EFMA) which is an affiliate of the National Association of Evangelicals. Since the NAE has been a chief haven for new evangelicals through the years it is not surprising that many of the missions which comprise this group are new evangelical in their tendencies. It is mainly composed of denominationally-related mission boards though there are also a few nondenominational ones. Such boards as those of the Christian Missionary Alliance, Assemblies of God, Conservative Baptists, and Free Methodists are found here. Such independent groups as Youth for Christ, Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, and Navigators are also part of it.

The second missionary grouping is that of the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association (IFMA). This includes a goodly number of the so-called “faith boards,” or interdenominational, unaffiliated mission agencies. Such boards as the Africa Inland Mission, Greater Europe Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, and The Evangelical Alliance Mission are numbered among them. A few belong to both the EFMA and the IFMA. The IFMA is committed to this statement of position: “It is recognized that within liberal groups there are some individuals who are concerned that the Gospel go forth in its fundamental, evangelical form. IFMA missions provide a channel of missionary giving for many of these, and for independent nondenominational churches as well.” The evaluation of another concerning IFMA is accurate:

Missionaries are accepted from liberal denominations or churches as long as they agree to the doctrinal position of the mission societies . . .

Separation from ecumenism is practically impossible in this situation. Many a fundamental church finds its only tie-in with the World Council of Churches is through supporting missionaries who are members of or are supported by WCC churches. Mission societies in this situation find themselves entangled in WCC commitments in spite of the fact that they make pronouncements against the liberal WCC position.

In recent years, the IFMA has worked closely with the EFMA. At the present time it is represented on eight joint committees with the EFMA. One has the impression that they

hold similar neo-evangelical views. “While the IFMA has generally been opposed to the tongues movement, it has recently drawn closer to the EFMA, which has in its membership a number of Pentecostal groups” . . .

In assessing the IFMA’s missions, we should note that some of them are much farther into the young-evangelical camp (a more radical neo-evangelical) than others. Some of them receive WCC funds to aid their medical or educational ministries while others do not. On the other hand, some of the IFMA mission societies are more conservative—a few societies have even resigned because of the young-evangelical trend in the Association (“Focus on Missions,” published by Fellowship of Missions, May 1976 issue).

3 AN EVALUATION OF THE NEW AND YOUNG EVANGELICALS

SOME PERSONS HAVE THE NOTION that to evaluate critically any movement in which true, born-again Christians are involved is unspiritual work indeed. There is a certain naivete about many believers which causes them to accept almost at face value any man or movement quoting a few Bible texts and employing Christian jargon. Very often believers are given the impression by certain leaders that if one possesses true Christian love one will never question brothers in Christ nor call attention to their errors. It is significant, however, that the Apostle Paul prayed that the love of God might abound in the hearts of the Philippian Christians, but that it might do so in “knowledge and in all judgment” (Phil. 1:9). The word “judgment” would better be rendered “keen discernment.” We are told that believers should possess keen discernment, the ability to distinguish between the good and the bad, the right and the wrong. Regrettably, many Christians seem unable to do this. It is not a mark of Christian love to accept uncritically whatever is taught in the name of Christ. We must evaluate, test, and judge that which is presented as Christian truth. Certainly movements such as the new and young evangelicalism require some investigation and analysis.

Caution needs to be given that not all within the new and young evangelical camps will agree with every viewpoint that has been examined in this booklet. We have tried to set forth trends, tendencies, and examples. Not every individual will embrace every point, but this does not gainsay the fact that the position is held by some within the movement. New and young evangelicalism must be seen as a whole. Only then can the tremendous danger of its thrust be appreciated.

As Regards Doctrine

While not denying the necessity for *some* doctrinal framework many new and young evangelicals play down the strategic importance of doctrine. They see it as a stumbling block to evangelical ecumenicity and as a barrier to fellowship. Even in as crucial a matter as the inerrancy of Scripture some would “pussyfoot.” The National Association of Evangelicals has been one of the principal organizational havens for new

evangelicals and their sympathizers. At the thirty-fifth annual convention of this organization in February 1977, some speakers spoke very strongly against requiring agreement on the doctrine of inerrancy and their remarks were reported as follows:

Pastor Don Moomaw of Bel Air Presbyterian Church in Beverly Hills, California, suggested that belief in Christ, not commitment to a doctrinal statement is the basis of unity, and he gave Fuller Seminary a ringing endorsement in this connection. Professor Bernard Ramm of Eastern Baptist Seminary denounced an “adversary scholarship” that “attacks, destroys, and puts others down” (*Eternity*, April 1, 1977).

The “green-grass evangelicals” (another term for “young evangelicals”) were discussed by one writer who enumerated a number of their characteristics as he saw them. Among the characteristics were these:

1. Green-grass evangelicals are not interested in doctrinal questions like “eternal security.” Green-grass evangelicals believe that debates over Scripture (infallibility, inerrancy) pay no great dividends. They are more experience-centered and rest their case for Christianity in the character of their encounter with Christ (Bernard Ramm, “Welcome Green-Grass Evangelicals,” *Eternity*, March 1974).

Tragically, many good Christians are so ill taught, particularly in theology, that they tend to fall for such statements. Such believers must be reminded of the importance placed upon sound doctrine in the New Testament. Paul warns concerning being “carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14) and against teaching which is “contrary to sound doctrine” (1 Tim. 1:10). Numerous times, particularly in the pastoral epistles, he exhorts to maintain “the faith” (1 Tim. 6:21), “the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15), and “good doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:6). So strongly did Jude feel about maintaining sound doctrine that he was willing to earnestly contend for it (Jude 3). Pleas for spiritual unity at the expense of God’s truth are siren voices to be resolutely resisted by God’s people.

One must remember also that the term “evangelical” is used in a very broad sense by many. One prominent spokesman declared that an evangelical is “one who believes the evangel” and “whose life is governed by the scriptural revelation of God and His purposes” (“The House Divided: An Interview with Carl Henry,” *Eternity*, October 1976). This definition, however, could allow a great many people to live under the

umbrella of the term “evangelical.” It no doubt was purposefully formulated with this in mind. Persons who believe in an inerrant Bible and persons who believe the Bible contains errors—both can be “evangelical” according to the foregoing definition. The same author does go on to admit that the term is “flexible” and “confusing.” The same “umbrella” concept, however, was urged by Billy Graham when he spoke at the missions conference in Urbana sponsored by Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Graham urged evangelicals to “accept unity in diversity” and “avoid divisiveness over such matters as Biblical inerrancy, charismatic phenomena, and political activism” (*Baptist Bible Tribune*, from Religious News Service report, 1/21/77).

Believers who would obey God cannot and must not follow such advice as the foregoing. “The faith” (an organized statement of divinely-revealed truth) has been “once-for-all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). The word indicates the finality and authority of divine doctrine. We cannot adjust it to suit false concepts of Christian unity.

As Regards Outreach

New and young evangelicals and their organizations have blurred the Biblical lines of distinction in such a way in the work of world-wide evangelism that it makes an increasing problem for the careful pastor who is trying to lead his people correctly. Campus Crusade, an organization primarily geared to reaching college youth for Christ, has been one of the chief offenders in this area. They are widely known for their very ecumenical approach to evangelism. Paul Tassell, who spent an entire week at the headquarters of Campus Crusade, attending one of their institutes for evangelism training, had this to say about their approach to the unbelief and apostasy of the modern churches:

During my week at Arrowhead Springs, I talked to people who were taking the Lay Institute for Evangelism Training for the express purpose of using it to increase the ministries of the local churches in apostate denominations. The United Methodist Church, the United Presbyterian Church, the American Baptist Convention, as well as liberal Episcopalians and Lutherans were represented, and not one word during the entire week of seminars and lectures ever gave any hint that converts should be warned of the mounting menace of the ecumenical movement in America. In fact, we were specifically told “not to mention church denominations in a derogatory way” (“Is Campus Crusade Scriptural?” p. 10, published by Regular Baptist Press).

Bill Bright, founder and leader of Campus Crusade, has been active

in promoting ecumenical evangelism for many years. He served on the executive committee of “Key ‘73”, a continent-wide evangelistic thrust held in 1973 which completely ignored the doctrine of Biblical separation and enlisted cooperation from approximately 130 denominations and groups including the liberal, Christ-denying denominations and also Roman Catholic Churches. In 1972 Campus Crusade sponsored “Explo ‘72,” a large interdenominational youth meeting held in Dallas, Texas. The meeting featured generous doses of rock music, and fostered a broad spirit of cooperation including evangelical and liberal elements. An official press release quoted the director of Explo ‘72: “He pointed to the ecumenical spirit prevailing at Explo. ‘Roman Catholics not have taken a strong interest but have been involved in arrangements.”” The release mentioned many others across “the broad spectrum of Christianity” as having participated in the event.

One of the latest efforts of Campus Crusade was the evangelistic outreach program called “Here’s Life, America.” It involved workers from local churches in given areas telephoning persons in their community and seeking to obtain “commitments” to Christ over the phone. These were then to be followed up personally. Workers came from almost 12,000 congregations from all the major denominations. As usual with such enterprises Campus Crusade accepted the cooperation of all regardless of what their position was on vital Bible doctrines. An experienced fundamental pastor in the Chicago area had to face the problem of the “Here’s Life, America” campaign in his area. He was asked in an interview whether or not he had reservations about it.

Yes, I do have reservations. When I realized the “Here’s Life, America Campaign” is sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ, I recognize that this is an organization that has continually promoted ecumenical evangelism in seeking to reach a city for Christ. . . . The representative asked me if I had any questions. I asked him what type churches were asked to participate in the campaign and he answered, “All types.” As a matter of fact he had that very week spoken to the Unitarian Church in the area and asked them to participate. They said they were not interested in evangelism (From interview with Pastor Robert Gray, *Voice*, January 1977, p. 7).

Certainly no one who desires to follow the clear instructions of the Bible could participate in such a program as Campus Crusade promotes. It is direct and explicit contradiction to the Scriptures. We are not to be “unequally yoked together with unbelievers” in spiritual efforts (2 Cor. 6:14).

The Lord’s people must also guard against the attitude that the

gospel of saving grace includes social reform. We believe it is impossible for new evangelicals to demonstrate from the New Testament, the outline of teaching for the Church today, that social reform is explicit or implicit in the Church's mission. Those New Testament passages that do deal with the social responsibility of the believer almost altogether refer to his social responsibility to other believers not to the world at large. Nowhere in the New Testament is the Church commanded to engage in efforts to rectify social ills. Such a concept is an invention of those who wish to see it there. That general good will should be shown toward unbelievers, and that kind deeds should be done for them, is certainly appropriate and within the Christian ethic. But to state that the Church's *mission* includes action calculated to change existing social structures is going beyond the Word of God.

As Regards Separation

As we have seen, the new and young evangelicals are much opposed to the concept that there should be separation from deniers of the faith. The Scriptures, however, are quite clear on the matter. If anyone teaches contrary to sound doctrine, he is not to be fellowshipped and honored as a believer (1 Tim. 6:3-5). Apostates who blaspheme God's sacred truths will increase in the last days. The command concerning them is explicit—"from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:1-5). False teachers are to be rebuked "sharply" (Tit. 1:13). Some persons are "heretics" (Tit. 3:10). The word refers to those who have exerted their will independently of properly-constituted authority and may refer either to doctrinal error or divisive conduct. Persons who embrace error and cannot be won back to the truth should be rejected. Certainly this involves a refusal to fellowship them in ecclesiastical relations. Paul's instructions concerning false teachers leave no room for misunderstanding: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

How have great Christian leaders of other eras viewed the question of separation? Charles Haddon Spurgeon faced the issue squarely when the Baptist Union of Great Britain was gradually slipping into liberalism. Spurgeon's church, Metropolitan Tabernacle, probably the largest Baptist church in the world at that time, left the Baptist Union in protest. Was Spurgeon contrary to Scripture in so leading his people? Hear his own defense:

For Christians to be linked in association with ministers who do not preach the gospel of Christ is to incur moral guilt. A Union which can continue irrespective of whether its member churches belong to a common faith is not fulfilling any

scriptural function. The preservation of a denominational association when it is powerless to discipline heretics cannot be justified on the grounds of the preservation of “Christian unity.” It is error that breaks the unity of churches, and to remain in a denominational alignment that condones error is to support schism (Ian Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, pp. 164-65).

As Regards Inspiration and Biblical Interpretation

From the very inception of the new evangelical movement the seeds of its own destruction have been within it. At first some of its advocates kept their doubts about Biblical inspiration to themselves. They signed doctrinal statements affirming their belief in that which they did not believe. In more recent years, however, they have become more bold and openly questioned and denied the full and complete inspiration of the Bible.

No born-again Christian should condone or support for a moment men, institutions, or movements that repudiate the historic Christian faith in a fully-inspired Bible. “All scripture is God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16). “The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet. 1:21). Did the Holy Ghost make errors in producing the Bible? Could He, as a perfect God, have produced a Bible with errors? The answer is obvious. He could not. Jesus Christ declared that the Scriptures are perfect and completely accurate down to the last “jot and tittle” (Matt. 5:18). Paul was emphatic in stating that the revelation he and the other apostles received was given “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth” (1 Cor. 2:13). The inspiration, therefore, extends not merely to the thoughts, general concepts, or doctrinal truths, but to the very words in which the Scriptures were written. Every word in the original manuscripts as authored by the divinely-chosen authors was the very word God wanted employed.

As Regards the Christian View of Science

New and young evangelicals are enamored with modern scientific thought. Many of them feel that because fundamentalists tend to resist much that is taught in the name of science they are “obscurantists.” In the face of such criticism God’s people must ever remember that the preponderance of modern scientific philosophy and organized thought is in deadly opposition to the revealed Word of God. Where there are valid scientific principles we accept them. They exist because God made it so. We are grateful for such advances and discoveries in the scientific world which have made our life more pleasant. But the underlying concepts

which govern the various branches of modern, unbelieving scientific investigation are diametrically opposed to God's Word. Interestingly enough one of the older new evangelical leaders, Carl Henry, recognized this and in a very masterful way discusses it (see especially chapter on "Secular Man and Ultimate Concerns" in *God, Revelation, and Authority*, pp. 135 ff.). But, on the other hand, many new and young evangelical thinkers and writers see nothing at all amiss with an effort to reconcile Biblical truth with evolutionary thought (see discussion of evangelical controversy over evolution in article on "Evangelicals and Evolution" by William Craig, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Summer 1974). Certain professors at Wheaton College such as James Buswell III have been leaders in the attempt to keep "intellectually respectable" while seeking to build bridges between modern scientific theories propounded by rank unbelievers and Biblical truth (cf. James Buswell, "A Creationist Interpretation of Prehistoric Man," *Evolution and Christian Thought Today*, Russell Mixter, editor).

What should be our response to the new evangelicals at this point? *The Bible is the final authority even in matters of science.* There is no "law of double revelation" such as propounded by many new evangelical thinkers by which they mean that the Bible and the created universe constitute two parallel revelations of God of equal validity. The theologian is to interpret the Bible and the scientist is to interpret the universe. The American Scientific Affiliation, ostensibly composed of scientists who are Christians, declared, "Two great Volumes have been laid before man . . . While in the Bible we have a verbal revelation in material nature, we have a pictorial revelation of the same . . ." (Quoting Herbert Morris, *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, September 1973). This leaves the door open for these men to say that the Bible is authoritative in areas of "redemptive truth," but contains errors in statements of a scientific nature. These statements must be "corrected" by scientists who are familiar with the data.

Are Christians free to believe that God may have used processes to bring Adam into existence rather than accepting the historic view that he was created by the immediate act of God? Dr. Walter Hearn believes that the Bible does not demand belief in the immediate creation of Adam. In a scientific seminar held on the campus of Wheaton College, Dr. Hearn declared: "Surely we know that processes have been involved in bringing *us* into existence. Why shudder, then, at the idea that processes were involved in bringing Adam into existence? . . . Why may we not assume that God *did* use processes?" (*Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, June 1961, p. 42). We may *not* assume such because such an assumption is in direct contradiction to the express teaching of Scripture and is also subversive of much theological truth which is based upon the doctrine of Adam's direct creation.

There is only one course to maintain—that of complete and unquestioning loyalty to the Bible. Some new and young evangelicals profess such loyalty, and yet support their deviations by appeals to semantics, critical principles of exegesis, or variant “interpretations.” Let us call some of these views what they really are—deliberate rejections of clear Bible teaching. Where the Bible speaks clearly upon a scientific matter its word is final. All the “evidence” and testimony of scientists, whether professing Christians or not, cannot gainsay it. The Bible is right and the scientists are wrong if there is some discrepancy between them. Thus Bernard Ramm and E. J. Carnell (among others) are wrong when they advocate a form of theistic evolution whether they call it “progressive creationism” or “threshold evolution.” We cannot temporize with such views as though they may have some element of legitimacy. We must repudiate them wholeheartedly as being alien to the Scriptural teaching.

As Regards the Role of Women

The young evangelicals in particular have become quite vociferous about the place of women, especially in the Church. As we have already seen, many are advocating their ordination as ministers of the gospel. Is such a position a viable option? Is it possible that the great exegetes of Scripture and the leaders of conservative Christianity for centuries have been mistaken when refusing to ordain women or give them certain places of leadership in the Church? An examination of New Testament teaching on the subject will enable one to answer the question. *There is no instance in the New Testament of an ordained woman preacher.* The major passages in I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:5 ff prohibit any woman from serving as a “bishop” (elder, pastor). This is the testimony of Scripture. It is final in the matter.

Summary

The brand of evangelicalism discussed in this booklet is poisoning Christendom. Early new evangelicals began to compromise on vital issues. The fruit of their compromise is now seen in the more blatant deviations of the young evangelicals. Believers are being misled. Local churches are being disrupted. Formerly strong schools are being weakened. The path to a complete apostasy is being prepared. This is no time for the trumpet to sound an uncertain note.

4 DIRECTION FOR FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANS

WHAT IS A PROPER COURSE OF ACTION for those who wish to remain true to Biblical teaching? What should be our response to the growing influence of new and young evangelicals? Should we do anything? Someone has rightly said that causes are often lost by those who remain neutral and do nothing.

Courageous Leadership Is Needed

To confront such movements and men as we have described here is a formidable task. Conflict does not come easy for many and yet there is constant conflict if one is seeking to maintain a stand for truth. The people of God, particularly as they are seen in local congregations, are dependent upon their pastor for leadership. He is the shepherd of the flock, the teacher of Scripture, and the leader of his people. It is he who must speak courageously yet lovingly concerning error. It is he who must follow the example of Paul and “warn everyone day and night with tears” (Acts 20:31).

One of the responsibilities of a shepherd is to guard the sheep. Thus a pastor must be alert to potential danger and must watch for “grievous wolves” which threaten to destroy and scatter the flock (Acts 20:29). He must be willing to explain clearly the characteristics and dangers of such a movement as new evangelicalism. To do this will sometimes bring him into conflict with even cherished friends. It will make him appear to some as a “contentious troublemaker.” Some will denounce him as lacking in Christian love. But despite all of these adversities he must persevere in faithfully guarding his sheep from the encroachments of those who would feed them on poisonous weeds.

Alert and informed laymen must stand with their pastor. Deacons and other leaders of a local church must be resolute in contending for “the faith which was once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). They must resolve to abide by Scriptural principle and not by sentimental emotionalism. This is easier said than done. New evangelical principles often appear in cherished mission boards, schools, or individuals who

long have been supported by the church. To take a Biblical stand in opposition to these principles is often a heart-wrenching experience.

Proper, Balanced Instruction Must Be Given

The divine antidote for false doctrine is the ministry of the Word of God (2 Tim. 4:2–4). God’s people must be fed. A strong, expository ministry of truth must be maintained regularly. The preacher must be a student of Scripture. He must give them the “strong meat” of doctrine and not merely “fluff.” Many people are carried into error because they have lacked sufficient exposure to the truth. Ignorance of theological truth is particularly noticeable among so many Christians. No doubt this is why pastors are commanded to “exhort with all long suffering and doctrine (theology)” (2 Tim. 4:2).

Care must be given to a *balanced ministry*. Some brethren, in their zeal to combat the new evangelicalism, have spent too much time on the “issues.” Their people starve while they instruct them in the latest ecclesiastical controversies. There must be a balance between feeding and warning. Yea, feeding really includes warning. A loving gracious attitude must also be displayed.

Enlightening Information Must Be Made Available

How are people going to avoid the errors of the new and young evangelicals if they do not know what they are nor who is propagating them? Here is an area where many pastors and churches are weak. Their people have practically no information available to them on the subtle deviations of this movement. Some pastors, fearing controversy which might unseat or unsettle them in their pastoral office, figure to “let well enough alone” and keep their people in the dark regarding such movements as we are here discussing. Such a tactic will often backfire. Issues arise, people are untaught, and they move in the wrong direction perhaps unaware of all the implications of their decision.

Pastors should instruct their people concerning current movements, men, and issues which are affecting the church. Midweek services are sometimes good places to do this. Through the columns of a church paper it can be done. Pertinent literature can be made available through the church book store or book rack. Speakers can be brought from time to time who have special expertise in these fields. It is so sad that many fine, fundamental churches in which are found earnest Christian people are almost totally ignorant of the dangers of new and young evangelicalism. It is no wonder that many are led astray.

Decisive Action Must Be Taken

Doctrinal statements, resolutions, and position papers are fine, but there comes a time when your convictions are tested. Some critical issue

arises and calls for a decision. Billy Graham plans to come to your city for an evangelistic crusade. Tremendous pre-campaign publicity and organization is evidenced. Considerable pressure is put upon area pastors and churches to cooperate. Within your church some influential leaders may favor such cooperation. It is contrary to the Biblical principles held by the church, but, some reason, it is expedient for us to go along. To do otherwise would be to create an awful ruckus in the church. What should be done?

In the first place, such a problem can be largely defused if the pastor has been teaching his people proper principles long before the announcement of such a crusade. If he has been doing so, the bulk of his people will see the fallacy of cooperating with Bible-deniers and his task will be made much easier.

Nevertheless, it is still not easy to lead a church to a decision about such a matter. Or, perhaps a mission board or missionary long-supported by the church has adopted new evangelical views. Here is an even more emotional issue. In any such case there must be loving but decisive action. We cannot hide from problems and hope they will disappear. We must courageously and Scripturally confront them and do what is right. We may lose some people. But we will have gained the favor and blessing of the Lord. This does not mean that we should be belligerent, mean, or "nasty." We should be "speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). But we must not think it is loving to refuse to stand for what is right.

Conclusion

The new and the young evangelicals constitute a very real menace to Biblical Christianity today. Many of them are no doubt true believers. This compounds the problem because there are some vital areas in which we would agree with them. However, wrong opinions can be held by born-again people. We cannot afford to forget that.

As the young evangelicals drift further and further from Biblical truth it will be even more essential that true New Testament churches and Christians remain steadfast in the faith, "holding fast the faithful word" (Tit. 1:9).

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