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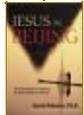
Cory Doctorow: Eastern Standard Tribe (pdf)



Ian Caldwell: Rule of Four Novel. Pretty good. (***)

Eddie Gibbs/Ryan Bolger: Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures

Quite simply the best book yet on Emerging Church. Available for pre order. (*****)



David Aikman: Jesus in Beijing A gift from Justin Baeder Looks fantastic - thanks! (***)

LISTENING TO



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MARCH 26, 2005

ARE WE A THREAT TO THE GOSPEL?

“Leaders Call Emerging Church Movement a Threat to Gospel”. “A recently developed way of envisioning church known as the “Emerging Church Movement“ deals carelessly with Scripture and compromises the Gospel, according to a prominent evangelical scholar and a Southern Baptist seminary president.” David Roach, Baptist Press, summarizing D.A. Carson and Al Mohler.

Al Mohler and Don Carson are both worth reading because they have given attention to us. Al Mohler read “The Post Evangelical” and Don Carson attended an Emergent Convention. I think its great that they are taking the effort and they deserve our respectful treatment as we respond to them.

“Dr. Carson doesn't understand us.” says Brian McLaren who gets spanked again, this time with a Baptist rod.

I wish the Baptist Press would critique some young Baptists inside the emerging church scene and not Brian McLaren who would be criticized by Baptists whether he was part of the emerging church or not.

Al Mohler: “The worldview of postmodernism -- complete with an epistemology that denies the possibility of or need for propositional truth -- affords the movement an opportunity to hop, skip and jump throughout the Bible and the history Christian thought in order to take whatever pieces they want from one theology and attach them, like doctrinal post-it notes, to whatever picture they would want to draw.” [Article](#)

So, are we a threat to the Gospel?

That hurts. I have devoted the last 25 years to the living out and telling the Good Story in about 40 countries. I was under the impression that I was HELPING the story get told, not hindering or threatening it. So what about letting me respond to that last paragraph, as one who was raised a Baptist and has also been identified with the emerging church . . .

1. How can we deny the possibility or need for propositional truth? - the Bible is loaded with it such as “God is love” and “Your word is truth”(Jn. 17:17) and “all who live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” These propostions are true. I know. I have EXPERIENCED them and they would be true even if i had not experienced them. I think certain Baptist leaders should put down their philosophy books and go to the streets where the gospel is being shared in truth by emerging church people. Where is this straw man, anyway? How about someone offer a \$100 reward for the person that comes forward and says what the critics accuse them of? If there is someone out there, and I dont think there it, i want to have a word with them - they are causing a lot of grief and confusion, even though they are helping to support the evangelical book publishing industry.

2. I was taught at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in a storytelling class by Southern Baptist missionary John Langston that the way to avoid hopping and skipping all over the Bible was to take a more NARRATIVE view of the Scriptures in their entirety as the unfolding story of God. And not only should we read the Scriptures in their written genre (80% is narrative story) but also we should COMMUNICATE it as story also. I was a pastor who preached propositional 3 point sermons in churches for 7 years. And then I switched to a more storytelling narrative style of reading and communicating the bible. And someone please correct me if i am wrong, but I feel I am doing far less jumping around and piecemealing Scripture then when I was preaching propositionally.

XML

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Let God's word be God's word again.

CHALLENGE 2:

I challenge Trainers and Educators to move away from the philosophical psychological How-To teaching series and choose instead to just ground people in the Bible - Stop being a motivational speaker and start being a preacher of the Word. Stop your pycho-babble and start giving out the pure word. Less sermon giving and more Bible reading.

BTW - i have talked to pastors about this and they have said that in their seeker driven churches, there is no way they could allow 15 minutes of pure Bible reading. Emerging Churches have no problem with Bible reading - as long as you want. In fact, a church in Prague read the entire New Testament out loud on the streets last Christmas Eve- it took 17 hours. The people who are sending me regular email support to help me read through the bible this year are from the emerging church . . need i go on?

For a fuller treatment of Don Carson, his criticism, his upcoming book and my thoughts, type these words into your Google search engine

"Don Carson, emerging church" and see what I have to say.

What do you think? Are we a threat to the gospel? Or do we need to take a really good look in the mirror?

POSTED AT 05:05 PM | [PERMALINK](#)

TRACKBACK

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Listed below are links to weblogs that reference [Are We A Threat to the Gospel?](#):

» [Is the Emerging Church a Threat to the Gospel?](#) from A Free Will Baptist in St. Louis

In a recent Baptist Press article, D.A. Carson and Albert Mohler assert that the Emerging Church movement compromises the gospel. Carson has a new book on the topic to be released by Zondervan in June. Andrew Jones responds to the BP article in th... [\[Read More\]](#)

TRACKED ON MARCH 26, 2005 10:39 PM

COMMENTS

I love it when you get cranky! Preach it bro, and if necessary use words...!

POSTED BY: [ROGER WILLIAMS](#) | MARCH 26, 2005 05:30 PM

Andrew, I'm a Southern Baptist. I've been doing my best to respond to the growing desire from some of our leaders to demonize the emerging church. I've responded to this Baptist Press article as well as others.

I've actually started a website for emerging SBC leaders to start our own conversation about reaching emerging generations and seeing change in the SBC, and I'm going to link to your post for discussion. Thanks for working hard to clarify things.

Emerging SBC Leaders

POSTED BY: [STEVE MCCOY](#) | MARCH 26, 2005 05:59 PM

I'm thankful for your post, Andrew. I've recently begun reading "Recaliming the Center (The Conservative rebut of Grenz' "Renewing the Center". Sadly Grenz will not be able to address his critics.) and am genuinely disheartened by the lack of understanding shown by the opponents of what we are trying to do. Your post has helped to put into words the frustration that just seems to build with each reading. While there are genuine ideas that do need to be challenged in our circles, to approach



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things in a mature way of conversation is dangerous. Isn't that where a lot of this began, with folks wanting to find places of dialogue rather than factions and name-calling? I'm saddened that, as far as we thought we had come, the dogs are still nipping at our heels.

I am thankful for the role that God has given you as a voice both to us who are "emerging" as well as to those who are called to remain in their modern roles. Please keep us up to date on your thoughts about these criticisms. They will help us greatly when the critics begin to take hold of the hearts of those God has called us to shepherd.

POSTED BY: [JUSTIN NYGREN](#) | MARCH 26, 2005 07:13 PM

>. How can we deny the possibility or need for propositional truth? ... Where is this straw man, anyway? How about someone offer a \$100 reward for the person that comes forward and says what the critics accuse them of?

Have you read Carl Rashke's book "The Next Reformation"? I'm sure he could use the \$100. He, among others, feel that the Bible does not speak in 'propositions', like the Greek philosophers did, but in 'relational truth'. He feels that by rejecting propositional truth the church can be led out of the enslaving idolatry of enlightenment approaches to knowing God. Hope this helps
Stephen Gibert

POSTED BY: [STEPHEN GILBERT](#) | MARCH 26, 2005 08:12 PM

However, Steve, I don't know that Carl would deny the reality of propositional truths such as the one's that Andrew has listed (among the myriad contained in the Scriptures). Even if the Scriptures were written in a society that experienced reality more through relationship than through proposition, to deny that there were propositions at all would be taking it a little farther that Carl would have gone.

POSTED BY: [JUSTIN NYGREN](#) | MARCH 26, 2005 09:35 PM

I'm a student at New Orleans Baptist Seminary- a Southern Baptist seminary. I come from a mixed background denominationally- Disciples of Christ, Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal... and I didn't even become a christian until I was 18 (i'm now 23). I was raised by a dad who was 41 when I was born, and I've learned a lot from him. I think a lot like him. You might call him modern in his thinking, which I guess makes me some kind of mutt (denominationally and thought-process wise). I'm not special. I'm one of those young Christians you referred to as "hurt by the old system." What I find is that now I am part of a "seminary" church that is effectively sending missionaries across the globe and ministering to the city in diverse ways. They do it almost completely using the old system, mixed with community groups. On the other hand, I've become strongly convinced that the emerging church is a force that God is using. I heard Erwin McManus speak about a year ago and having read his books, I've learned a lot about his style. I've also noticed nobody in the emerging culture claims him. Part of me wonders why.

In the past, I've read blogs that promote certain lifestyles as OK when it is, to me, biblically untrue. These blogs refer to themselves as emerging Christians or associate themselves with the emerging church. One I even found two clicks from tallskinnykiwi.com. I don't know where you stand on that stuff; it makes sense that you probably do not agree with those other sites. The point I'm making is that I'm trying to find balance between emerging and modern while staying true to the theology I understand. I am Southern Baptist because I identify theologically with them. Otherwise I could have gone to Notre Dame Seminary down the road. Or anywhere else. I guess all I'm saying is- relevance to culture is not optional- as McManus put it. Some cultures are more emerging than others. The lesson I've learned over the last year is that you can't make a bunch of country boys into the emerging church. They are what they are. Maybe that's the true balance.

POSTED BY: [JOE KENNEDY](#) | MARCH 26, 2005 10:06 PM

return to scripture. A call away from dogmatic thought and doctrine is claimed by the modern church as a call away from traditional Christianity. I personally attempt to rely on Scripture alone. This is a dangerous thing in that you find true freedom in that scripture.

POSTED BY: [CHAD SMITH](#) | MARCH 26, 2005 10:16 PM

I better go and start putting Challenge#1 and Challenge#2 into practice

POSTED BY: [DAVIDT](#) | MARCH 27, 2005 03:01 AM

I think both you and Doug Pagitt were both prophetic in your prediction that the attacks on the emerging church will intensify over the next couple of years and I don't think I really believed you until the firestorm erupted over Brian's Generous Orthodoxy.

You are correct that many of the same accusations that the modern established church has attacked us with is the same that itself is guilty of and shows some lack of reasoning that I can't understand.

Part of me thinks that some elements of evangelicalism is at it's (fundraising) best when it has an enemy and for now we are it.

I am looking at a corner of my library now and I am seeing a plethora of "rebuttall" books about all sorts of issues. The books sell on fear and on a fight and I think they only serve to reignite the base rather than any critical engagement.

POSTED BY: [JORDON COOPER](#) | MARCH 27, 2005 03:20 AM

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