

## **MODERNISM – FUNDAMENTALISM – NEW EVANGELICALISM AND BIBLICAL INERRANCY**

The purpose of this paper is to give a partial history of the age-old battle for the Bible. My prayer is that we settle two major truths in our hearts and minds: the sufficiency of God's Word, and the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit to empower all who share belief in the verbal inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy of God's Word. The word inerrancy is used repeatedly in this paper for clarity. The word infallibility is used by some to define limited inerrancy. Dr. Harold Lindsell's book, "The Battle for the Bible," holds to this strong view of Biblical inerrancy as the watershed issue in the evangelical world.

Throughout the history of mankind, we have had two major lines of development. One has followed man's way in what we might call the wisdom of this world or the way of the natural man. The other major line of development is God's way, which follows after the revealed wisdom of God's inerrant Word, and this is the way of the spiritual man.

### THE BEGINNINGS OF THEOLOGICAL MODERNISM

Theological modernism (or liberalism) had its origin in Europe, particularly in Germany, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was merely the rationalistic thinking of that time applied to the Bible. It was the dawn of the scientific era. Many men felt they were on the verge of discovering the secrets of the universe and solving the problems of mankind. Anti-Christian thinkers such as Darwin, Hegel, and Marx led the movement to dethrone God and replace Him with scientific humanism. Modernism spread like ivy; its growth stages are described by saying, "It sleeps, it creeps, and it leaps" ("New Evangelicalism -- Its History," Way of Life Literature, c. 2001). This is precisely what occurred. It began in a small way in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, then began to creep forward and expand its influence into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and finally it leaped from denomination to denomination and spread throughout the world in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The essence of theological modernism is an assault on the infallible authority of the Bible. A central tool of the modernist thinkers is the higher critical approach, which is applied to the traditional authorship and historical accuracy of the Pentateuch, Isaiah, and Daniel, as well as other parts of

Scripture. The conclusion of such an argument encourages the questioning or outright denial of Old Testament miracles, such as the worldwide flood at the time of Noah, the destruction of Sodom by burning sulfur from heaven, Lot's wife becoming a pillar of salt, the ten plagues on Egypt, the dry-ground crossing of the Red Sea, Jonah's adventure in the belly of the large fish, and Job's suffering.

## FUNDAMENTALISM STEMS FROM THE FIGHT AGAINST THEOLOGICAL MODERNISM IN AMERICA

The label "fundamentalism," has developed many definitions in the latter half of the 20th century, many of which are intended as slander by those who deny scriptural inerrancy. The term 'fundamentalist' is used to describe all sorts of extremism.

What is Christian fundamentalism? It arose from the theological controversies that engaged every mainline denomination in the early 1900s, and described those who opposed theological modernism, which was beginning to entrench itself in many of the churches and seminaries of the day.

The United States had two benefits over the churches in Europe that were succumbing to modernism: state religion was not allowed by our Constitution, and we had been blessed by God with numerous outpourings of His Spirit since the founding of our country. Soon, though, theological modernism began gaining adherents in America. Fundamental Christian leaders, who believed the Bible to be verbally inspired, infallible, and inerrant, stood against the theological modernism, the tide that would diminish the authority of God's Word. Thus began the dispute called "the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy."

### 1910-1915

The publication of a series of twelve volumes written to expound on the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith sparked the battle. Way of Life Literature's "New Evangelicalism -- Its History" speaks to this dispute.

The stage was set for this battle by the publication of a series of books that were written to expound fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Published over a five-year period from 1910-1915, the series,

titled *The Fundamentals*, was composed of 90 articles written by 64 authors. With the financial backing of two wealthy Christian businessmen brothers (California oil magnates Milton and Lyman Stewart), some three hundred-thousand copies of the twelve paperback volumes of *The Fundamentals* were distributed to Christian workers in the United States and 21 foreign countries. The articles were edited by R.A. Torrey into four volumes when he was president of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA). The articles defended the infallible inspiration of the Bible, justification by faith, the new birth, the deity, virgin birth, miracles, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and other Bible truths. Not only did *The Fundamentals* address the heresy of Modernism, but also of Romanism, Socialism, and the Cults. Contributors included W.B. Riley, James Gray, G. Campbell Morgan, H.C.G. Moule, James Orr, A.T. Pierson, Thomas Spurgeon (son of Charles Haddon), J.C. Ryle, Philip Mauro, W.H. Griffith Thomas, R.A. Torrey, and B.B. Warfield.

At this time, numerous groups holding to Biblical fundamentals developed. They had separated from the modernist movement and held fast to Biblical inerrancy. Many continued to enjoy the gifts of the Holy Spirit and were launching revivals in the United States, Wales and around the world. The movement included Pentecostals, Holiness groups, independent fundamentalists, and many Black churches. The Assemblies of God began in revivals in Topeka, Kansas, and on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California as the movement spread. The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel was founded in Los Angeles in 1922 by Aimee Simple McPherson, the first woman radio evangelist. Holiness groups formed throughout the United States. The Church of the Nazarene encouraged unity in holiness; in October 1907, the Association of Pentecostal Churches in America and the Church of the Nazarene merged in Chicago, Illinois at their First General Assembly. This group embraced seven previous denominations. The Nazarenes and Wesleyan Church eventually drew together a majority of the holiness movement's independent strands. In 1908, there were churches in Canada, works in India, Cape Verde, and Japan, soon followed by work in Africa, Mexico and China. The 1915 mergers added congregations in the British Isles and work in Cuba, Central America, and South America. There were congregations in Syria and Palestine by 1922.

Additional fundamentalist groups grew out of the mainline churches that had conformed to the modernist agenda, such as Placentia Calvary Church in California (see footnote). Few of these movements were recognized by mainline denominations as anything other than fads that would soon pass. The popularity of Charles E. Fuller's "Old Fashioned Revival Hour" radio program reached thousands across the United States with his fundamental presentation of the Gospel. The YMCA had begun in 1851 in England and soon came to the United States, thriving under the leadership of fundamentalist Dwight L. Moody. Fundamentalism remained strong as they reacted to modernist heresy.

### 1919

The cause of fundamentalism was further advanced with the gathering of the World Conference on Christian Fundamentals in Philadelphia in 1919. Of the 48 continental states, 42 were represented in the more than 6000 attendees. Twenty-five addresses by eighteen teachers, including Lewis Sperry Chafer, R.A. Torrey, Paul Rader, C.I. Scofield, W.H. Griffith Thomas, and James M. Grey were presented at the conference. These messages were published in a book entitled: "God Hath Spoken," containing 25 sermons given at the Philadelphia Conference, in another attempt to respond to this increasing tide of modernism.

### 1929

Westminster Theological Seminary documents the changes that occurred in the next decade:

When formal theological seminaries were organized, one of the first was the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton, New Jersey, where instruction began in 1812. Founded by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the seminary held to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and Catechism as its doctrinal standards.

Princeton excelled under the leadership of distinguished teachers who devoted themselves vigorously and effectively to the development, propagation, and maintenance of the Reformed faith. Among those best known as teachers of the great scriptural system of theology set forth by Princeton's first professor Archibald Alexander were Charles Hodge, J.A. Alexander, B.B. Warfield, Robert Dick Wilson, and J. Gresham

Machen. But eventually a movement surfaced to end Princeton's adherence to scriptural theology, and in 1929, Princeton Theological Seminary was reorganized under modernist influences.

Among the Princeton faculty who objected to the turn toward modernism were Robert Dick Wilson, J. Gresham Machen, Oswald T. Allis, and Cornelius Van Til. Almost immediately after Princeton's reorganization, these four men founded Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, and, with others who were invited to join the teaching staff, continued the exposition and defense of the Reformed faith.

### 1942

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term "evangelical" in America was largely synonymous with fundamentalism; the words were interchangeable. When the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) was formed in 1942, some strong fundamentalist leaders such as Bob Jones Sr., John R. Rice, Harry Ironside, and David Otis Fuller became a part of the NAE.

Historian George M. Marsden writes about the general attitudes of the time in the introduction to his book *Reforming Fundamentalism*.

...the emergence of the "new evangelicalism," as distinct from fundamentalism, was a gradual process. In retrospect, we can see it clearly taking shape between about 1942, when the (NAE) was founded, and about 1957, when the break between Billy Graham and his separatist fundamentalist mentors was complete and "neo-evangelicalism" became a current term... Not all those who were willing to be called "fundamentalists" were anti-intellectual, polemical, or separatists. Some of the more moderate fundamentalists were using the word *evangelical* as a more respectable alternative... (they) still saw themselves allied with many separatist and more polemical fundamentalists... (Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987, p. xi)

With the rise of neo-evangelicalism, Bible-believing teachers and pastors on the other end of the spectrum joined to declare their faith in God's inerrant Word. Presuppositionally, it was believed that if God supernaturally created, then surely God could supernaturally communicate without error.

An influential board member of Fuller Seminary described the conflict this way:

By 1960 a break began at Fuller with a faculty roughly aligned into progressive and conservative camps over the choice of a president. A new influential member on the board had felt that fundamentalism had warped the Christian message by majoring on the minor in its demand for separation as the mark of the Christian life. As fundamentalists stressed the big five sins – smoking, drinking, dancing, card-playing, and theater attendance – they neglected the weightier fruits of the spirit. This view illustrated that the new evangelical break with fundamentalism was quietly attracting a new constituency as well as driving away part of the older one. They were deeply committed to the evangelical faith but desperately wanted to be free from needless stumbling blocks. The break with fundamentalism, however, was also fostering among the new-evangelicals a coalition of persons with somewhat differing positive reform programs...

These differing ideas leaned toward the views of Karl Barth's teaching that "the Bible **contains** the Word of God;" this made it easier to harmonize with the influence of modernism.

#### 1947

In June of 1947, a group of fundamentalists gathered in support of Charles Fuller's plan to establish a seminary of outstanding academic excellence with evangelical qualifications in the expanding and budding culture of the western United States. Charles Fuller, Harold Ockenga, Everett Harrison, Harold Lindsell, Wilbur Smith and Carl Henry were part of this formative group, establishing Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena. These men felt the hour for the West to enter its theological maturity had come, and that the future of Western Civilization at stake. Marsden suggests Fuller Seminary provides a comprehensive 'case study' in how all Bible seminaries have faced the battle of modernism, fundamentalism, new-evangelicalism and Biblical inerrancy.

#### 1966

Nineteen years later, in June 1966, a group of 51 evangelical scholars from ten countries gathered in Wenham, Massachusetts. For ten days, they debated the doctrine of Scripture. The meeting was sponsored by paper

magnate Weyerhaeuser, philanthropist J. Howard Pew, Billy Graham, and Charles Fuller. Some key people in the Fuller inerrancy controversy did not attend, including Lindsell and Henry. Daniel Fuller did attend. He, and others with similarly flawed views on inerrancy, faced scathing criticism from some conservatives attending the meeting. Constructive efforts to resolve the differences between those who believed in inerrancy and the liberal wing of new-evangelicals were unsuccessful. Though the discussions were largely cordial, occasional blowups dashed hopes to issue a meaningful collective statement. The issues continued to smolder; the meeting ended without a statement and has since been referred to as “Black Saturday.” (Note: Marsden’s account of Black Saturday is found in his book “Reforming Fundamentalism,” pp.208-215.)

### 1967

The next year, the conservatives in the mainline denomination of The United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. lost the battle for the Bible. The denomination overwhelmingly voted (almost 90% in favor) to adopt the seriously-flawed “Confession of 1967” as their contemporary statement of belief. The influence of Swiss, “neo-orthodox” theologian Karl Barth won the day. The subtlety was devastating. The Old and New Testaments were no longer unambiguously equated with the very Word of God. Rather, these Testaments were received as “...testimony in which it (*the church*) hears the word of God.” The church was “to approach the Scriptures with literary and historical understanding,” which meant that skeptical ‘higher criticism’ would be the normative hermeneutical tool of interpretation. “As God has spoken His word in diverse cultural situations, the church is confident that He will continue to speak through the Scriptures in a changing world and in every form of human culture.”

The influence of Barth prevailed with his view that “the Bible contained the Word of God,” as opposed to being the very Word of God itself. Through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the mainline denominations have fallen like dominoes in the battle for the Bible. Today there are no theological seminaries and divinity schools of any mainline denomination that are totally committed to the belief of the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. Some conservatives within these schools, though, have held fast to Biblical inerrancy, as have other important Christian movements that remain conservative on most points of theology. These include Pentecostals, Holiness groups, traditionalist groups, pre-millennial and dispensational groups, and Black groups. These groups

experienced great growth and became the leaders in mission work and evangelistic preaching of the Gospel of the saving grace of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

### 1976

Ten years after Black Saturday, in 1976, a “World Congress of Fundamentalism” gathered in Edinburgh, Scotland. This group met in Usher Hall and gave their definition of fundamentalism. They said, “Fundamentalism is militant orthodoxy set on fire with soul-winning zeal.” They listed seven statements that define a fundamentalist. According to their definition, a fundamentalist:

1. Maintains an immovable allegiance to the inerrant, infallible, and verbally inspired Bible.
2. Believes that what the Bible says is so.
3. Judges all things by the Bible and is judged only by the Bible.
4. Affirms the foundational truths of the historic Christian faith: The doctrine of the Trinity; the incarnation, the virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, bodily resurrection and glorious ascension, and Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; the new birth through regeneration by the Holy Spirit; the resurrection of the saints to life eternal; the resurrection of the ungodly to final judgment and eternal death; the fellowship of saints, who are the body of Christ.
5. Practices fidelity to that Faith and endeavors to preach it to every creature.
6. Exposes and separates from all ecclesiastical denial of the faith, compromise with error, and apostasy from the Truth.
7. Earnestly contends for the Faith once delivered.

This was also the year Dr. Harold Lindsell’s well-researched book, “The Battle for the Bible,” was published. The basic question of this book is this: Is the Bible inerrant or not? The author discusses the meaning of special revelation and inspiration, the Scripture’s witness to itself, and the historical view of inspiration and its implications.

The original jacket notes state, "The basic fact is that a view of 'limited inerrancy' has crept into evangelical Christianity. Churches, denominations, conventions, conferences, seminaries and individuals can be cited, revealing changes in position on the part of many of them in regard to the fundamental

doctrine of Biblical infallibility." These notes also quote Francis A. Schaeffer as saying, "Holding to a strong view of Scripture or not holding to it is the watershed of the evangelical world."

### 1978

Another two years had passed, when a gathering of leaders convened in the fall and issued the "Chicago Statement to Biblical Inerrancy" at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare Hotel. The meeting was sponsored by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. Nearly 300 noted evangelical scholars, including Norman L. Geisler, James Boice, John Gerstner, John Warwick Montgomery, Carl F.H. Henry, Harold Lindsell, Roger Nicole, Francis Schaeffer, J.I. Packer, R.C. Sproul, and John Wenham, signed the document. This meeting produced nineteen "Articles of Affirmation and Denial," which can be found online at [www.bible-researcher.com](http://www.bible-researcher.com). The following is what they called their "Short Statement:"

1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.
2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.
3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.
4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, and in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.
5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

It is important to understand the basis of the confusion caused by today's 'Emergent Church Movement,' which is moving to the extreme liberal end of the new-evangelical movement. These ideas are really not that new. They have been around since the Garden of Eden when Satan asked Eve,

“Yea, hath God said...?” Satan continued his deceptive ways in both the Old and New Testaments and has become much more aggressive in our day, even by promoting confusion through the use of inaccurate terms and definitions. Those on the extreme edge need to find a new definition to more clearly define who they are. Many are clearly not Christian, or what one would call followers of Christ, who believe in the inerrancy of His Words and claims. Once again, the belief of those who have accepted the inerrancy of God’s Word is being challenged. Some fundamental Christian pastors and members in their churches have become confused, and are drifting into heresy as their leaders seek to grow their churches with ‘Emergent Church’ programs.

One of the most recognized leaders in the Emergent Movement made this statement in 2005 at the Pew Forum's Faith Angle conference: "Now the word “fundamentalist” actually comes from a document in the 1920s called the Five Fundamentals of the Faith. And it is a very legalistic, narrow view of Christianity." These five fundamentals, declared by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. in 1910 and reaffirmed in 1916 and 1923, are the virgin birth and deity of Jesus, the substitutionary atonement through God's grace and human faith, the bodily resurrection of Jesus, the authenticity of Christ's miracles, and the inerrancy of Scripture. Without any of these five fundamental beliefs, there would be no Christianity; these were the very teachings of Jesus, and to deny them is to deny Him.

Many Christians are being drawn into the Emergent movement through their desire for an experiential understanding of God. They have not been taught to judge experience by the yardstick of Scripture. Thus, they are being drawn away from the Word into a belief system anathema to the teaching of Christ and unstable in its foundation. This same prominent leader in the Emergent movement recently declared "that (fundamentalist) group is shrinking more and more and more. On the other hand, Pentecostalism and charismatic evangelicalism is growing by leaps and bounds. It's growing huge all over the world." These leaders focus more on numbers and the popularity of their teaching than on the truth of the Word of God. They are not evangelicals at all, nor do they have an accurate definition of fundamentalism or evangelicalism.

Unstable personal faith will persist until a person settles, once and for all, their complete confidence in the inerrant Word of God. In this post-modern

period, the enemies that would diminish and pervert God's truth continue to work. The conservative fundamentalists who hold fast to Biblical inerrancy need to stand strong against those who have adopted a view that suggests that the Bible merely contains the Word of God, for such a view places man's authority equal or superior to that of God.

### THE CORE LEADERSHIP OF THE EMERGENT MOVEMENT ARE MEN WHO HAVE REJECTED THE INERRANCY OF GOD'S WORD

Most of those in leadership in this movement grew up in fundamentalist homes. They were the second-generation sons of fundamentalist parents and pastors, but they have adopted the ideas and characteristics of a more liberal 'new-evangelicalism.'

*Judges 2:10 "When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel."*

Many have rejected the God-given, heavenly power that is needed in the Church today. The power of God found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ that miraculously changes lives. The Bible says in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."

The gospel as presented in Romans, chapters one through eleven, begins with the issue of sin, covered in chapter 1:18 through chapter 3:20. The fact is presented, that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Then we have God's remedy for sin, which is to make men righteous through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross, as presented in chapter 3:21 through chapter 5: 21. The third part of this powerful gospel is given in chapters 6:1 through 8:39, as we learn to truly live and walk in the Spirit. The last part of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ deals with the sovereignty of God and the wonderful plan He has for each of our lives. We are left in awe and wonder as we embrace the gospel of our Lord. Paul would speak of the marvel of it all in chapter 11:33 and 36; "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out. For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

It is important we understand that the inerrancy of God's holy Word is a most critical issue. It makes a difference whether we are following the Word of God or man's interpretation of what he thinks God has said. To accept the idea that the Bible contains the Word of God leaves us with the question of what part contains His words and what part does not contain His words? It is a pick-and-choose situation in which man becomes the authority, or we simply admit that no one can know. Many sons of evangelical-fundamentalist preachers are determined to create this more liberal, New-Evangelicalism. They would not hold that the inerrancy of the Bible is a watershed issue, but prefer to be ecumenical, ecclesiastical diplomats. They prefer to be positive and inclusive, rather than holding to what Francis Schaeffer calls "true truth." They decided against a separatist mentality.

In our modern and post-modern period, Satan continues to work by dividing one generation from another and attempting to corrupt the foundations on which Christian belief is based. God and His Word also continue to work, performing miracles in the lives of men who will accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ by faith. The struggle between conservative fundamentalists who hold to Biblical inerrancy and those who have adopted the view that the Bible 'contains' the Word of God can be distinguished in three major, mid-twentieth century, Christian institutions: the National Association of Evangelicals, Fuller Seminary and Christianity Today magazine. The difference between these stances is made clear by applying the inerrancy standard.

In the first sixteen years at Fuller, two outlooks emerged among staff and students, between conservative fundamentalists and new-evangelicals. The conservatives included the founders, Charles Fuller, Harold Ockenga, Carl Henry, Harold Lindsell and Wilbur Smith. Among the progressive new-evangelicals were David Hubbard, Paul Jewett and Daniel Fuller. With President Harold Ockenga's final departure, the Seminary shifted into a different phase of growth under the direction of those with a more progressive, liberal and new-evangelical agenda. The history of fundamentalism and new-evangelicalism has been thoroughly researched from original documents and recorded in Marsden's book, "Reforming Fundamentalism."

THE GREAT CHALLENGE FOR FUNDAMENTALISTS IN THIS POST-MODERN PERIOD IS TO COUNTER THE EMERGENT HERESY

There was a time when most Americans accepted basic Christian concepts. Whether they were believed to be true or false, they were still thought to be needed for a stable society. Francis Schaeffer, the Wall Builders, and many others have carefully documented that there was a time when Biblical values were internalized in the conscience of nearly every child born in our country.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the humanistic Enlightenment movement promoted the power of human reason, which challenged the Biblical view that taught men to see and understand a coherent wholeness in the Scriptures, a view that takes us from the creation of man to the coming Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. With the 19<sup>th</sup> century, came both romanticism and scientific materialism. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has given us Marxism and fascism, positivism and existentialism, this last belief being of particular importance in this discussion. It is at the heart of the current 'Emergent Church' movement.

Existentialism encourages man to start with himself, philosophically, instead of starting with God. In the existentialists' failed attempt to gain personal freedom, he discovers instead the bondage of relentless and ultimate agony. He is anxiety and doubt-driven. He can't rely upon the God who has flawlessly communicated to mankind. "What part of God's Revelation to man has errors? Who is to decide? Can man really trust a God whose communication may have errors?" opines the existentialist. This is the cosmic dilemma for those who depart from the inerrant Word of God as the unifying principle of life.

As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a new worldview has emerged. The 'modern' has become 'old-fashioned.' The 20<sup>th</sup> century, for all its achievements and tragedies, is passing into history. The modern ideas that characterized the 20<sup>th</sup> century no longer seem relevant. We are entering a 'post-modern age.'

The term 'post-modern' refers to both a new time phase and a philosophical mindset. Since the 'modern era' is over, Christians have much for which to be thankful. It is cause for great rejoicing. Ever since the battles between the modernist and fundamentalist (and before), Biblical Christianity has been attacked by the forces of modernism with its scientific rationalism, humanism, and a bias against the past coherent wholeness of God's inerrant

Word. We no longer need to defend Biblical Creation over the absurd ideas that creation is some ‘fortuitous concurrence of accidental circumstances.’

The assumptions of ‘modern science’ are now being abandoned and this allows fundamentalist Christians to witness to a confused and hopeless world with the whole counsel of God’s inerrant Word. With the Holy Spirit guiding our witness, let’s take advantage of this opportunity. With God’s inerrant Word, taught verse by verse, chapter by chapter, book by book, we can fill the ‘Emergent Church’ movement’s hopeless and helpless void.

This Emergent Church movement is loaded with men who have bought into a philosophy that suggests there are ‘no absolutes;’ that if there are any, you will not know until the time of your death whether what you believed to be true was “true truth.”

The ideas of new ideologies have entered our post-modern culture and have found a place in many of our churches. Neo-evangelicalism has taken the place of conservative-evangelicalism or fundamentalism by replacing God’s inerrant Word with whatever anyone may suggest is true or not true about His Word.

It is clear that what John wrote in his first epistle continues in our day.

*1 John 2:18-23 declares: “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son, does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”*

It is well to remember that the Holy Spirit-inspired Word warns about this departure from the truth of God’s inerrant Word. The Bible warned that many false teachers would creep into the churches and deceive many; and in

fact, such false teachers were already active during the times of the Apostles (Matthew 7:15-23; 24:5, 24; Acts 20:28-30; 2 Corinthians 11:1-20; Galatians 2:4; Philippians 3:1-2; 3:18-19; Colossians 2:4-8; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:14-21; 3:1-13; 4:1-4; Titus 1:10-16; 3:9-11; 2 Peter 2:1-22; 3:1-18; 1 John 2:18-19; 4:1-6; 2 John 7-11; Jude 3-19; and Revelation chapters 2 and 3).

Throughout the history of mankind, from the beginning, we can follow the path of men and nations choosing to go God's way or those who chose to go man's way. The Old and New Testaments give many clear examples of men who have chosen to follow after the way of the flesh, the world and the devil, rather than choosing to follow after God's inerrant Word. This choice of men continues into our Church Age. Thank God for men who choose to follow after the revealed will of God given in the revelation of His inerrant Holy Word, and made clear by the indwelling Holy Spirit in our hearts and minds.

Footnote: An interesting account in Marsden's book (page 38) tells how, in the 1920s, Charles Fuller, fresh from his studies at BIOLA (Bible Institute of Los Angeles), took over an adult Sunday school class at the Presbyterian church in Placentia, California. By 1925, the class had grown so large and so fundamentalist that it caused a serious rift with the pastor of the church. As a result, Fuller led his class out of the Presbyterian Church and reorganized it as the Calvary Church of Placentia.

Such schisms were becoming increasingly frequent among dispensational fundamentalists at that time. Until the 1920s, such fundamentalists had usually taken for granted traditional mainline denominational affiliations. Now, however, they were breaking off into independent -- often called "Calvary" -- churches, which were forming the base for a vigorous branch of evangelicalism outside of the major denominations.

From the hymn: "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing."

O to grace how great a debtor; Daily I'm constrained to be!

Let Thy goodness, like a fetter; Bind my wandering heart to Thee:

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; Prone to leave the God I love;

Here's my heart, O' take and seal it; Seal it for Thy courts above.