

## The New Evangelicals - Busy Sweeping Out Spider Webs

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Some forty years past I had to look up the word "apostasy." In the Bible it refers to the church in the last days being influenced by faithlessness, liberalism and secularism. Sadly I have witnessed this trend gaining and now it is spiraling out of ..  
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Evangelicals have until recently held the line on major moral issues like abortion and same sex marriages. Rev Lieth Anderson the new president of the National Association of Evangelicals says that he doesn't see these two issues going away for the organization that now represents about 45,000 churches. But things are morphing at an alarming pace among younger Evangelicals.

{bot\_wrgoogle}The new causes now being considered for the front burner are global warming, poverty, especially in places like Darfur and the scourge of aids. From California, the state that has Christians already deeply concerned about SB 777 a bill that effectively wipes the traditional family off the map, Pastor Rick Warren of Orange County's Saddleback Church has endorsed the battle effort against these social issues as worthy of the churches foremost attention.

New York Times and Washington post have signaled a heads up about the death of Jerry Falwell and craftily connected it to the death of the entire Evangelical legacy of actively embracing political conservatism in America. This is no surprise considering the source, but is it true?

The answer is both yes and no. On the yes side it is true as much as it pertains to the willingness of Evangelicals to bring the much touted global warming and aids issues into their agenda. According to recent Barna and Pew Forum research estimates the social justice and the traditional moralist camps are about equal in size. But concerns are rising that the Evangelical church sees itself left out of the loop and may be afraid of appearing indifferent to issues that the rest of the country takes so seriously.

On the no side of the answer is the fact that although the numbers of moralists and traditionalists are shrinking somewhat they are intensifying. The new concentrated version of the old standard bearers is also fully capable of holding the line and getting the job done. To the churches still guided by the Bible, God and one are still a majority with or without Rev Falwell.

To many conservative Christians, getting onboard the social justice train is the equivalent of joining a local church because it looks good to the neighbors and the business community. The causes are worthy but the motive is not.

After careful scrutiny, the science of global warming is still fraught with diametrically opposed findings and scientific opinion leaving it in a very suspect state at best. It will take more than a panicky documentary from former Vice President Al Gore to convince the conservatives. Global warming hype is for some the new magic bullet that bypassed the Food and Drug Administration's usual scrutiny and is now being taken as the cure for everything that ails both America and the world. To many Americans global warming frenzy is only proof that the snake oil peddler is still alive and well in the USA.

To the conservative Christian, deep concern over the spread of aids is not without reason but it raises questions about liberalism's blatant social hypocrisy. Government and the Evangelical church combined are wearing their own helplessness to stem the tide of immorality, Educators that welcome the new morality and choose to add it too their mission, and media that rakes in billions promoting overall licentiousness hardly seem worthy or qualified to be on the forefront of this issue much less to put it on the front burner for the church.

Unknown by many outside the church is the fact that it is plagued by the same forces and shifts that dog the American political scene. Evangelicals, Pentecostals and many historical denominations in America have both conservatives and liberals trying to drive or hinder the polity of the church.

The Bible is the document that is questioned in the church. In national politics the Constitution comes under fire because it was drawn up so long ago that there are those who wonder if it applies to the rapidly changing face of the country's social fabric.

In the church there are those who wonder if such an ancient book has anything at all to do with the business of the present day. The Bible addresses holiness and the Constitution speaks to freedom, both documents are subjective so it is easy to wrangle and wrest either one with other highly subjective interpretation or extrapolation and thus leave them impotent and meaningless.

It is the Conservative believer that holds the Bible up to its plainest and original interpretation. Such people have largely been Evangelicals in America, until lately. Neophytes of the new social justice set are at their best misinformed and at their worst they are fear mongering purveyors of all that is nascent and innocuous. Liberalism could never be charged with having a war to which nobody came. It does produce a war whose soldiers may be fighting against an imaginary enemy or at best the wrong enemy.

Liberalism is the plague of the modern church in America and some would add ecumenicism and syncretism to that diagnoses. Ecumenicism is the idea that separate denominations should come under one roof and function as one, developing a centralist leadership and purpose. It's a big church house where one size fits all.

The rub with ecumenicism is that by its very nature it leads to syncretism, the next step in the plague. Syncretism is the need to unify the doctrine of the newly joined divisions of the ecumenicised body. This requires throwing out or seriously altering disparate views and doctrines to make everyone amenable to the final statement of faith. In the process many traditional beliefs or core beliefs are shattered all the way up to and including the Bible itself.

Many churches elect to stay out of the fray and remain autonomous and independent. Fortunately when the Bible forewarns of an apostasy it also implies

that some will do just that, stand alone. Like the statesmen, soldiers or pioneers of early America, those who stood alone carried the day and often made history in the process. The church will do the same and in the end only those independent and conservative churches that refuse to meld into the greater emerging body will not be part of the promised apostasy.

Conservative Christians don't see issues, causes or opinions in their Bibles. What they see is a plan laid out by a living God to aid the living. If the plan is not followed it leads to trouble, sickness, calamity and death.

If global warming is a fact it is an outgrowth of human indulgence. Our clamoring for ever more consumer goods, gasoline and toys keeps the exhaust fumes and smokestacks bellowing out the hydrocarbons. They are a byproduct of a sinful and concupiscent society that is panicking at the result or the effect of their behavior and not once admitting that they are part and parcel to its cause.

Our push for complete unbridled sexual freedom has created its own side effects. Blaming any particular person, group or section of society for causing the spread of aids is a debate that has come and gone. Sadly, the collective behavior of this nation and the whole world never comes into debate. Will the whole world accuse itself? It surely will not and it will resist anyone or anything that does, including the constitution or the Bible message.

Conservative Christians hold to the message of the Bible as the bottom line. What is that message and does it directly address the latest social justice issues that are slipping into the apostate church of the day?

The Biblical message addresses the latest social justice issues by prioritizing all the issues that affect civilization. At the top of the list is "sin" that penchant to indulge the body and the mind with anything it should desire at any moment of the night or day. It is this penchant for indiscriminate sexual fulfillment and insatiability in the pursuit of material goods that are the cause. The effect is among other things global warming and the spread of aids.

Denying nothing to ourselves is called the "good life" and will never be recognized as the bad way of life that conservatives say it is. Getting liberals to admit to any mistakes is hard enough, getting them to admit that they are the cause of the very problems they seem bent on solving would be a miracle. Liberalism doesn't allow for miracles!

Forty years of witnessing the church and the body politic in this country slipping headlong into apostasy is disconcerting. More disturbing is that the cause and the answer for this downward trek is very simple to find and easily understood. It is not an answer that is readily accepted and that is what creates such a dismal bottom line.

Simply put, the Bible says that replacing the God given Biblical view of our

world with the secular view is what causes every problem not just the latest social issues. Sin is still at the top of the list. It is in our nature, it is in our past, it will be in our future and it alone is our final demise.

Sin is the spider weaving its web all over our private and national life. Dealing with the effects of sin such as global warming or the spread of aids is like constantly sweeping out the spider's webs but never doing anything about the spider.

Rev Bresciani is the author of two books. He also is a columnist for several online sites and magazines. His articles are read throughout the world. For more articles and news from around the globe visit "The Website for Insight"

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