

A Biblical Critique of the Emerging Church

- I. Introduction
 - a. Definition
 - b. Key leaders: McClaren, Kimball, Sweet, Pagitt, Webber, Smith
 - c. Paradigm shift
 - d. An internal attack (Acts 20:29-30)
- II. Eight areas of redefinition
 - a. Missiology
 - i. Present postmodern generation
 - 1. Emergent church: postmodern and post Christian
 - 2. Bible: John 12:32, power of the Gospel
 - ii. Alternative religions
 - 1. Emergent church: inclusive
 - 2. Bible: 2 Cor 6:14-16
 - iii. Evangelism
 - 1. Emergent church: non confrontational
 - 2. Bible: John 4:21-26
 - b. Epistemology
 - i. Emergent church: Gadamerian and dialectical
 - ii. Bible: perspicuity and certainty (2 Tim 2:15; Luke 1:4)
 - c. Bibliology
 - i. Authority
 - 1. Emergent church: Scripture, reason, tradition, experience

2. Bible: *sola scriptura* (Mark 7:13)
- ii. Sufficiency
 1. Emergent church: necessary to learn from other religions
 2. Bible: sufficiency of Scripture (2 Tim 3:17; 2 Pet 1:3-4)
- d. Ecclesiology
 - i. Areas related to the worship gathering
 1. Worship
 - a. Emergent church: multi-sensory, liturgical, contemplative
 - b. Bible: go back to the beginning, Matt 6:7
 2. Preaching
 - a. Emergent church: conversational, story telling, experiential
 - b. Bible: primacy of authoritative preaching (2 Tim 3:15-4:2; Neh 8; Eph 4:11-12; Matt 4:4)
 3. Male leadership
 - a. Emergent church: egalitarian
 - b. Bible: 1 Tim 2:12-14
 - ii. Areas related to the nature of the church
 1. Kingdom
 - a. Emergent church: kingdom = church
 - b. Bible: kingdom cannot come through human effort (Matt 23:37-39; 25:31)
 2. Social gospel
 - a. Emergent church: social gospel

- b. Bible: primacy of evangelism and discipleship (Matt 28:18-20)

3. Ecumenism

- a. Emergent church: unity > truth
- b. Bible: unity < truth (John 17:17, 20-23)

e. Soteriology

- i. Emergent church: regeneration through mysticism
- ii. Bible: regeneration through faith in Christ alone (John 3:3-7; Rom 8:9)

f. Christology

- i. Emergent church: weakening of penal substitution
- ii. Bible: penal substitution

g. Eschatology

- i. Importance
 - 1. Emergent church: over realized eschatology leading to a neglect of prophetic matters
 - 2. Bible: 2 Pet 1:19
- ii. Genre
 - 1. Emergent church: apocalyptic genre
 - 2. Bible: genre override
- iii. Eternal punishment
 - 1. Emergent church: softening of eternal punishment
 - 2. Bible: eternal retribution (Matt 25:41, 46; Rev 14:11)
- iv. Protology (2 Pet 3:3-7)

1. Emergent church: anti young earth
2. Bible: James Barr quote

h. Worldview

i. Homosexuality

1. Emergent church: uncertain on homosexuality
2. Bible: Gen 1:27; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Matt 19:3-6; Rom 1:26-27; 1
Cor 6:9-11; Jude 7

ii. Emergent church: left of center political ideology