

What Is Robert Schuller 'Rethinking'?

Crystal Cathedral conference accused of twisting biblical Christianity

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Note from Pastor Kevin Lea follows this article.



Crystal Cathedral

It's an all-star conference set for the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif., Jan. 17-19 [2008].

Former President George H.W. Bush will speak. Chuck Colson will make a presentation. Larry King will be there. Rupert Murdoch will address attendees. Ben Stein will appear. And Kay Warren, wife of Saddleback Church megapastor Rick Warren, will join Robert Schuller, the white-haired, bespectacled purveyor of "possibility thinking."

What could such a diverse group have in common? What's the topic? Well, it's a little vague. It's called the "Rethink Conference," and Schuller promises 30 "Aha!" moments from the 30 different speakers confirmed for the event.

Not everyone is thrilled about this meeting of the minds. Some, including Christian author and former New Age devotee Warren Smith, suspect an agenda to subvert the church – to take the focus off biblical truth and absolutes. "From my perspective as a former New Age follower, I believe that Robert Schuller's mission has always been to 'rethink' and 'change' biblical Christianity into something 'new' – as in New Age/New Spirituality," he says.

Smith's "Deceived on Purpose: The New Age Implications of the Purpose-Driven Church" documents Schuller's contacts and endorsements of New Age stars such as Gerald Jampolsky, Neale Donald Walsch and Bernie Siegel.

"As a former New Age follower I could hardly believe it," says Smith. "On October 17, 2004, more than 20 years after his first appearance on the 'Hour of Power,' New Age leader Gerald Jampolsky was once again Robert Schuller's featured guest. I was not surprised on one level, because I had always been

aware of Schuller's affection for New Age teachings. What did surprise me was Schuller's willingness to still be so openly aligned with a veteran New Age leader like Jampolsky."

Smith says it was Jampolsky who first introduced him to "A Course in Miracles," the best-selling New Age bible that taught him "there is no sin," "a slain Christ has no meaning" and "the recognition of God is the recognition of yourself."



All of Jampolsky's books, according to Smith, are based on "A Course in Miracles." But yet, there was Schuller on his [TV show](#) recommending all of Jampolsky's "fabulous" works. He even noted he sold some of them in the Crystal Cathedral bookstore. And, according to Smith, for awhile, Schuller even hosted "A Course in Miracles" study groups in his church.

It's not a one-way street, either, says Smith. New Age leaders like Walsch, author of the best-selling "Conversations With God," and Jampolsky go out of their way to praise Schuller, too.

"They know that Robert Schuller has always been open to spiritual compromise," he says.

According to Smith, Schuller has always "done a good job of softening up the church" for what he sees as unbiblical New Age ideas. And that's just what he expects the "Rethink Conference" is all about.

If indeed that's what the conference is all about, some other big names are going along for the ride. They include Christian pollster George Barna, former heavyweight champ George Foreman, American Center for Law and Justice founder Jay Sekulow, Gary Smalley and "The Case for Christ" author Lee Strobel.

"Never before have we gathered such dynamic leaders who will challenge us to think outside the box as we grapple with a changing culture and our response to it," said Schuller.

The conference will not only be attended by thousands at the Crystal Cathedral,

but it will be telecast by satellite around the world by Church Communication Network, according to organizers.

"These culture pioneers know what is center-stage in our culture right now and also what is breaking on the horizon," says Rethink Conference executive director Bill Dallas. "This conference will confront outdated and pre-conceived ideas, offer new perspectives and open our minds to all kinds of possibilities that connect us with out shifting culture without compromising our core values."

Smith just wonders about those "outdated and pre-conceived ideas."

"The church does not need to 'rethink' and 'compromise' its God-given biblical doctrines to accommodate the world," he says. "It needs to rethink its willingness to follow worldly leaders like Robert Schuller."

Note from Pastor Kevin Lea: The Bible warned us that it would be like this in the last days. Discerning Christians should take note of the names of those attending this conference and prayerfully consider whether they can be trusted to be faithful followers of the Gospel of Jesus:

2 Tim 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (NKJ)