

Commentary and News Alert

5 Reasons Why the Emerging Church is Now Receding

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Note from Pastor Kevin Lea: On February 5, 2008, Trevin Wax wrote an article titled, "5 Reasons Why the Emerging Church is Now Receding." Excerpts of Wax's article are at the end of this commentary by Roger Oakland. I completely agree with Roger's discernments, which state that the real end-game of the Purpose Driven/Emerging church is to deceive and dumb-down the unsuspecting sheep as they are brought back into the fold of the Roman Catholic Church heresy. The leaders of this deception may change the name of the movement and its emphasis, but their goal remains the same.

I encourage the sheep to stay away from the books written by the dozens of men who are trying to lead the protestant church back to Rome. Roger Oakland is a true watchman on the wall (Ezekiel 33). I recommend that readers sign up for his newsletters and support his ministry.

Comment From Understand The Times (Roger Oakland): (Don't Bury The Emerging Church, Yet!)

Trevin Wax's article titled "5 Reasons Why the Emerging Church is Now Receding" posted February 5, 2008, asks some interesting questions and raises some valid concerns with regard to the Emerging Church. However, unfortunately Wax has drawn conclusions that steer readers far from an accurate picture of understanding the times from a biblical perspective and it is necessary to sound the alarm.

Wax asks the question, "Has the Emerging Church begun to recede?" then answers it with a "yes," giving 5 reasons why this is so. While Wax points out several crucial problems of the emerging church, (true biblical evangelism, doctrines on hell and the deity of Christ, etc.), he has underestimated the seriousness and the expansiveness of the emerging church movement by suggesting that it's "influence" has "begun to wane."

He suggests that because some young pastors and leaders are distancing themselves from the term emergent or emerging, this is "a clear sign that the conversation is ending." This is not an accurate view of what is happening throughout the world as the documented facts reveal.

Certain aspects of the emerging church, like other trends or fads that hit Christianity, will no doubt come and go. Perhaps the name will even change. However, the underlying spirituality (I call it emerging spirituality) and the overall vision of the emerging church is not going to fade away or disappear, even if, as Wax suggests, it blends into the evangelical church. It will still exist. Thus, I would disagree that the emerging church is on its way to a burial.

The ideologies and theologies that have been presented by the emerging church and the purpose driven church (one of the greatest evangelistic tools for the emerging church) have opened the door to a much bigger delusion that is coming in the name of Christ. The catalyst for this delusion is “contemplative spirituality” along with the desire to stimulate the senses to become more engaged with “God.”

This is the delusion that is foretold in II Thessalonians chapter two, in which the apostle Paul describes the final preparation for the religion that sets up the antichrist. I believe this will be the religion of Christian Babylonianism and that is presently being prepared by the Roman Catholic Church to unify religion in the name of Christ—the Eucharistic Christ.

The emerging church and the purpose driven church are simply paving the road to Rome which paves the way to the religion of the anti-Christ. For those who may doubt what I am saying, take a look at the February 2008 cover story of *Christianity Today*. It confirms these very things.

The *Christianity Today* article titled “Lost Secrets of the Ancient Church” says that “evangelicals are connecting with the early church” and admits this is basically a “Catholic” looking church with a particular emphasis on ancient mystical practices.

Trevin Wax acknowledges this move. He states:

Now that evangelicalism has begun listening to the Emerging Church’s concerns about ecclesiology, Kingdom theology, incarnational spirituality, ancient rituals, etc., we are beginning to see the best that Emerging has to offer being incorporated into the larger stream of evangelicalism.

Wax is not alone in his assessment. The *Christianity Today* article mentions several popular evangelical leaders who find this move toward an “ancient” faith appealing *and* necessary. In “Faith Undone” we documented this move to “vintage” Christianity (also called ancient-future Christianity) was made popular by the late Robert Webber who also encouraged his readers to consider the “presence of Jesus” in the communion wafer as a valid position. This view, of course, is Roman Catholic and not biblical.

Further, this ancient faith, focusing on church fathers of the early centuries and the mysticism that enveloped many of them, will not just blend with evangelicalism – it will consume it and absorb it back into the *Mother* church, a hope and plan that Rome has for what they consider the lost brethren (they call it the New Evangelization). And the emerging church and purpose driven church are the catalysts that will make this happen.

And so, whether the terms emerging church and purpose driven church someday fade away, the objectives will not.

This is why I must disagree with Trevin Wax when he says:

Has it [the emerging church] accomplished anything good? Yes. Perhaps that’s the best news of all. We’re seeing the receding of a movement that has served its purpose - reawakening evangelicals to the necessity of the Church and the importance of *being* the Church

to the world.

This is an inaccurate and misleading picture. When the emerging church has “served its purpose” evangelical Christianity, as we have known it, will be no more. Those adhering to biblical truth will be viewed as troublesome and evil; and masses of people will be pledging allegiance to a world religion that will not include the Gospel of grace through Jesus Christ.

It is time for Bible believing Christians to be Bible believing Christians and avoid the apostasy that is underway and affecting every denomination and fellowship that professes the name of Jesus Christ.

**February 5 - 5 Reasons Why the Emerging Church is Now Receding
By Trevin Wax**

FULL ARTICLE: <http://trevinwax.com/2008/02/05/5-reasons-why-the-emerging-church-is-now-receding/>

Has the Emerging Church begun to recede? I say yes, and here are five reasons why.

1. The Emerging Church does little evangelism.

Surely the Emerging Church is not the only segment of Christianity that fails in the evangelistic task. So I'm not throwing stones here. I am merely pointing out that which some Emerging leaders (Scot McKnight, Dan Kimball and others) have been saying for a long time. *The Emerging Church isn't making many converts.*

What the Emerging Church *has* succeeded at is reaching young, disgruntled Christians who are fed up with the problems in traditional evangelicalism. Another issue that affects evangelism is the lack of clarity and focus regarding the nature of salvation.

2. Some Emerging leaders have embraced a disturbing lack of clarity on key doctrinal and social issues.

But most of the non-Christians that I meet with (and most of the Christians I minister to as well) want to do business with serious theological issues, like *Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do Christians believe that Jesus is the only way to God? How can a good God send people to hell? Isn't it intolerant to proselytize?* They don't want to hear pontifications on how “these are complex questions... maybe we can search together and eventually find some answers.” They want to know what Christians *believe*.

Some Emerging leaders consistently refrain from speaking out on important moral and theological questions of our day. Asking for a moratorium on making pronouncements the Bible has already made may sound humble and gentle, but in reality, it leaves people struggling with sin and guilt without a clear word from God.

3. Many who initially intrigued by the Emerging conversation are now

distancing themselves from Emerging theology.

The whole “missional” movement is a case in point. Here you have young, hip pastors in their thirties who might be called “postmodern” in their style of worship, but who no longer want to the baggage of theological liberalism that the term “Emerging” is beginning to connote.

When dozens of successful pastors/writers/bloggers who were initially intrigued with the Emerging Church begin shedding the name and throwing off the baggage, it's a clear sign that the conversation is ending (or at least becoming more narrow in its tendency toward liberalism).

4. Some aspects of the Emerging Church look faddish and fleeting.

Now that the Emerging Church is becoming known a “style of worship” or a “way of doing church for young people,” the movement has moved out of the realm of contextualization and has joined the evangelical faddishness it once protested.

Think of Jesus Movement of the 1970's. Replace Vietnam with Iraq, beards with goatees, and contemporary music with liturgy. (I'm overstating my case here, but you get my drift.)

5. Evangelicalism is beginning to address the good questions raised by the Emerging movement.

The Emerging Church is a protest movement and some of the protests have been good and necessary. As I've written [before about fundamentalism](#), movements that find their identity in protesting usually find smaller and more insignificant things to protest about.

Now that evangelicalism has begun listening to the Emerging Church's concerns about ecclesiology, Kingdom theology, incarnational spirituality, ancient rituals, etc., we are beginning to see the best that Emerging has to offer being incorporated into the larger stream of evangelicalism. As that happens more and more over the next few years, the Emerging Church as a movement will be more and more unnecessary.

Many of the leaders have deconstructed orthodox Christianity so much that there is no foundation on which to build. That's a problem. And that's why so many are jumping *off* the Emerging bandwagon.

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