

# ECUMENICAL LOCOMOTION

## How Mythology Has Replaced Theology



The Scripture warns that the time will come when men will “not endure sound doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:3). Moreover, Peter spoke of “cunningly devised *fables*” (2 Pet. 1: 16). Paul puts us on notice not to “give heed to *fables*” (1 Tim. 1:4), and to “refuse profane and old wives’ *fables*” (1 Tim 4:7). He further admonishes Titus not to give “heed to Jewish *fables*, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth” (Tit. 1:14). These references to “*fables*” make clear that not all beliefs are equally valid. To the contrary, these as well as many other scriptures, implore us to reject *fables* and *myths* and “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3).

In every age there are *fables* or *myths* that must be exposed and exploded. For if these myths are embraced they will undermine and erode the theological foundations upon which our faith is founded. Modern myths are legion, and here are three that cannot be ignored.

### **Myth # 1: All Unity is of God.**

Today, doctrine is viewed as a stumbling block to fellowship rather than the biblical basis for it. We are repeatedly told that we must lay aside our doctrinal beliefs and convictions. Doctrinal precision and clarity are now viewed as a threat to the Kingdom of God. You can believe anything you want, just so long as you are not certain about it!

Unity is being held forth as the main prerequisite for revival. The notion is that if we would just drop our guard, break down the walls, and join hands with everyone that loves “Gee-sus” it would virtually guarantee the salvation of our nation.

In 1994 the Evangelicals and Catholics Together (E.C.T.) document was released to the public. Charles Colson spearheaded this effort and many prominent Christian leaders and Roman Catholics signed and endorsed the E.C.T. These men believe we must put aside our irreconcilable differences and embrace one another in order to stop the moral landslide in our nation. The document calls on us to stop evangelizing Catholics and recognize them as brothers and sisters in Christ. What is amazing is that people apparently believe we can reclaim the culture while undermining the doctrine of salvation!

The book, [Ecumenical Jihad](#), written by Roman Catholic apologist, Peter Kreefte, advocates a holy war on our immoral culture. He reasons that since Buddhists and Muslims worship one God, they must be worshipping the true God. He goes even further--all atheists who are seeking Truth are in reality seeking God too. His version of modified universalism states that all monotheists will make it to heaven. In his line of thinking, only one General is capable of leading and winning the culture war. He calls for evangelicals, Catholics, and everybody else to sign on and join forces under the headship of the Pope.

The cry for unity is also heard in the “traditional values” campaign. All this talk about “values”, “virtues”, and “ethics” is a feeble and ill-fated attempt to preserve our American way of life

(standard of living). The boycott brigades and “call in” campaigns have been engineered to halt the moral landslide. The thing you seldom hear from this crowd is any reference to the moral law of God. Flexing political muscle has not produced lasting change and never will apart from the true source of moral authority—the law of God.

The Grand Rapids Press carried the following:

“One of the most visible American televangelists, the Rev. Robert Schuller...through his weekly Hour of Power TV program...reaches 20 million viewers from his Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif. The cathedral houses an organization called Christians and Muslims for Peace....Schuller told (Imam Alfred) Mohammed that if he (Schuller) came back in 100 years and found his descendants Muslims, it wouldn't bother him so long as they weren't atheists.”

The spirit of togetherness permeates our day. Doctrinal distinctives, moral boundaries, national allegiance, and all that divides must be swept away. All lines must be erased before the one world government and religion of Anti-Christ is established.

The reason fundamental Christianity is against the grain is because we have an exclusive message in an inclusive age. Jesus drew the line when He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). Further, He plainly states He didn't come to send peace, but a sword. The sacred sword of Truth divides husbands from wives, parents from children, brothers from sisters, and man from himself. Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17 was not a plea for external or organizational unity. It was a prayer for unity of spirit among His true followers.

Unity is not always positive. In Genesis 11, the whole earth was unified in language for they were all of “one speech” (v. 1). Mankind united in those days to build a tower to identify themselves lest they “be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth” (v. 4). The Lord recognized the power in confederacy of spirit and said, “Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do” (v. 6). God confounded their language and divided them by scattering them all over the face of the earth.

### **Myth # 2: All Spirituality is Good**

Religious, political, and educational leaders are speaking about the need of moral and spiritual renewal. The mere use of the word “spiritual” is universally regarded as a good sign by Christians. Most make the wrong assumption that any mention of that which is spiritual has reference to the God of the Bible. But nothing could be farther from the truth.

Early Gnostics (the knowing ones) believed that matter, or physical things, were evil. They had been “enlightened” to recognize the superior value of the “spiritual.” By elevating mysticism and asceticism they were guilty of devaluing Christ and His atoning work. Colossians was written to counter this heresy. Paul warns, “Let no man beguile you of your reward...intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind” (Col. 2:18). Mystical speculation and rituals were, and are not, the way to worship God.

The New Age Movement is nothing less than a revival of Pagan occultism. Many who are wearied by materialistic obsession have sought refuge in forbidden spiritism. God says, "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord." (Deut. 18:10-12).

God expressly condemns witchcraft and involvement with demonic activity. One movie actor stated he was retiring so he could devote himself to his "spirituality." He was quick to point out this had nothing to do with God. This form of spirituality is deadly and leads men to hell for all sorcerers will have their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8).

There is another and more prevalent form of spirituality, which is just as deviant and destructive as the occult. I speak now of the vague, murky, slushy, ill-defined, undisciplined religiosity commonly referred to in America as "Christianity."

One church sign read: "We accept *all beliefs and practices.*" Another admonished: "Don't be naughty, nasty, or *narrow.*" Unknowingly, such slogans are really disclaimers which disassociate these churches from the Truth as put forth in the Bible. Open-mindedness and broadness are seen as virtuous, but in fact are treasonous. Never forget that Noah was in the minority, until after the flood!

Modern churches that fall in lockstep with the church growth movement have abandoned theology and enshrined methodology. The goal is getting a crowd, not making disciples. The energy and effort put forth to create the right atmosphere are astounding.

Since these churches are afraid the Cross might offend some seekers, they really should erect two golden arches on the steeple and a sign which reads, "McCross." "You Deserve a Break Today" is the mantra of the religious junk food industry. The consumer mindset has thoroughly infected just about everything modern churches do. The apostles preached "repent and believe." The Ronald McDonald's in today's pulpits "evangelize" by appealing to self-esteem and offering temporary fixes. Come on in, grab your Self-McMuffin, and let the show begin! Prayer and fasting, frequently practiced by the early disciples, has been replaced with prayer breakfasts. The emphasis here is on supping, not supplication.

God warns us, "believe not every spirit." Then He commands us to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 Jn. 4:1). All that glistens is not gold and all spirituality is not of God.

### **Myth # 3: All Churches are the Same**

Militant evangelicalism is now attempting to erect an ecumenical bridge over an unspannable doctrinal chasm. These militants virtually demand the surrender of all non-negotiable doctrinal

convictions in order to put forth a united front for the betterment of our communities. These neutered clergymen really work hard trying to live up to their reputation as the third sex!

Compromise endeavors to make the best of incompatibles. William Graham Scroggie insightfully commented: "The church that sets out to spiritualize the world, will soon find that the world will secularize the church. When wheat and tares compromise, it is the wheat that suffers. Light and darkness, right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error are incompatibles, and when they compromise it is the light, the right, the good, and the truth that are damaged."

The tares who embrace error and walk in darkness have nothing to lose because they don't stand for anything anyway! Make no mistake about it; the militant evangelicals want you to give up what you believe.

Coach Bill McCartney, at the Washington Promise Keepers Rally, boldly called for denominational reconciliation. "We have a plan...Baptists...Lutherans...Roman Catholics...we've been divided...but now we're being reunited...! Nobody can go out of here without the same plan...every man connected to a church; every church connected to each other...!"

His statement was merely a continuation of a clear direction already in motion. Mike Timmis, a Roman Catholic Board member, prayed the following prayer in 1997 at a Promise Keeper's rally in Washington D.C.: "We recognize that we do have doctrinal differences...but, Father, we will not let these differences destroy our unity...this applies to Protestants of all persuasions; it applies to the Orthodox Church; it applies to Roman Catholics, of which I am one!"

What kind of unity is he talking about? "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). At last count there were well over one hundred brands of "Baptists." As with other denominations, many of these Baptists are openly pro-choice, pro-gay, pro-socialist, and anti-God. Denominational hierarchies have become fronts for every left-wing cause known to man.

It would be a sin against God to affiliate with and support churches that are adamantly opposed to Truth. Many are fighting apostasy with one hand and feeding it with the other. Apostasy cannot be reformed, it must be abandoned.

By simply heeding the scriptural admonition "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly" (2 Thes. 3:6) would preclude fellowship with the enemies of truth. Simply put, to get on board with the spirit of ecumenicism one must first repudiate the Bible command of separation.

It has been decades since the ecumenical engine pulled out of the station. Theological barriers have been systematically taken out of the way. With very little to impede its progress the locomotive has now achieved a full head of steam. There's no way to stop the train. But you still can do the Christ-honoring thing and JUMP OFF before it collides head-on with the judgment of God!

– Harold Vaughan