

New Calvinism – Its Emphasis & Impact

New Calvinism

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Bible Text: Zechariah 4:1-14
Preached on: Thursday, January 20, 2011

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Now we come to the second of these two addresses on the subject of the New Calvinism, this resurgence of interest seemingly in Calvinism, doctrines of grace, Five Points of Calvinism and such things as is particularly apparent in the United States but which we've seen last week also has its parallel here in the United Kingdom. And we were looking last time at different contours of these movements both in the UK and the United States and begin now to look rather more critically at some of its emphases and some of its practices.

Well, we'll been considering the subject of music. We'll been looking at its influence and impact, so much of it designed to make a direct appeal to our emotional system. Well, a second and related reason why we should not be happy at the music promoted as worship among the New Calvinists is this: irrespective of the music's intended aim to pitch into our emotional system, we have to say that music like rock and rap saturated as it is in a culture of rebellion and godlessness, in all conscience is an unclean thing to bring before the Lord of Hosts. How can one feel comfortable using something whose origins are so explicitly at variance with what is God-honoring?

There is a war on, you know, one of the most pervasive and harmful influences undermining morality and authority while simultaneously giving wings to immature youthful rebellion is rap style music and rock music in general. People in a peace loving nation against whom a hostile neighbor had declared war would not readily promote the catchy tunes or stirring marches of their enemies. Whatever the supposed merits of the lyrics, the sound of these things reminds us of our enemies and their bitter hatred of our God. This music is not a friend. It is part of a culture that is our deadly foe. In all conscience we cannot and should not sing it and make it part of our worship.

But there is a further point to be made here. So many in the New Calvinism think that we can embrace the output of someone like Stuart Townend of Keith Getty and embed their work with impunity in our song praises alongside the established hymns our forefathers sang. We, again, need to think carefully about this. Remember again that these songwriters are locked into a process that is reinventing worship into the emotional kickstart variety. That is their aim, but beyond that the movements they represent, such as Newfrontiers, pose a threat to vital elements of the Christian faith. There is the

charismatic emphasis on tongue speaking and continuing prophecy with apostles and prophets. There are worldly methods of church planting which I will mention shortly, and shallow ideas of conversion as well as the promotion of worldly tastes and lifestyles. Do we want to give credibility to this package by singing their songs? Do we want to communicate to them and to ourselves, especially our young people, that we are now effectively at peace with them? The Reformed charismatics certainly need no encouraging. They can already sense the whiff of surrender amongst the Reformed churches in the United Kingdom. They are only too happy to see once conservative churches and ministers laughed to scorn, the kinds of arguments that are being put forward here. That same unwillingness to contend for these principles will lead our young people especially poorly armed in the battle, and unable to contest this ground when confronted by the New Calvinism and its relaxed view about these matters.

So I do not count these elements of the Reformed charismatic movement as coming towards us in peace. I do not feel we can detoxify them for safe consumption in our own churches. They arise from a system of thought and approach where I sense a deep hostility and contempt for holy things. I find it impossible to sing their songs however good the lyrics knowing what thoughts and attitudes they are at home among.

Thirdly and again of absolute vital importance, the emotion-driven approach can only serve to bring souls into peril. How many persuaded of their good standing before the Lord because of the enjoyment derived from singing happy, bright songs in the church? How many are encouraged to believe they have peace with God because they felt peace in the service? Positive responses emerging from the worship experience do not amount to Christian conversion.

The Jesus that is loved out of this experience may not be the Jesus of Scripture. People can sustain the delusion by being part of a forward looking and thrusting group of people full of dynamism and bright ideas, but no number of good works, good experiences, can make up for an absence of the true Holy Spirit received as a result of the true work of regeneration. This is so solemn. Here is comprehensive, all-inclusive Christianity in the making. Here is the importing of the world while apparently building the church and establishing the kingdom of God. No wonder the church is so weak in our nation when so many have been added to the church through the dubious means of the Alpha Course or defective means of evangelism where music is the message. No wonder so many of these people when they have ascended to positions of power and influence disappoint us with their views on creation, or doctrinal error, or the role of Scripture, or separation from the world.

New Calvinism does nothing to stop and examine its musical methods above a few murmurings here and there. Some of their main players like Bob Coughlin, on occasion show they are alert to the issue that emotions are not everything, but their methods show that they are doing nothing to address these concerns with practical action.

Fourthly and related to this through the acceptance of these musically induced states, this has led to insufficient self-watch and self-examination. By being so uncritical in its

acceptance of the music and the experiences of the music, the New Calvinism risks shutting down a vital line of self-interrogation and inquiry; increasingly it is importing a model of spiritual experience which it regards as normative and not to be questioned. Deceived by the movement's sense of dynamic energy and optimism and perhaps lulled asleep by complacency born of its adherents to Reformed Creeds and Confessions, it has effectively insulated itself from conducting an adequate self-audit. 2 Corinthians 13:5, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

We can imagine how the health check report would come back. We might say, "Well, I believe the Five Points of Calvinism. I believe in a great and sovereign God. I experience great joy in the worship. I am enthusiastic. I enjoy the preaching. So all must be well." That is not to say that people are never challenged about the basis for their assurance. I can recall Terry Virgo speaking with insight about the dangers of music giving us feelings devoid of theological significance, yet when that was said and done, it was business as usual. The worship experience remained sacrosanct and beyond challenge.

I fear the reason more probing questions are not asked is that for too many people, too much hinges upon the experiences felt in the worship. People have taken life-changing decisions, believing themselves to have received divine communications in the context of such worship. To review this would be potentially devastating to the peace and happiness of many people, including some leaders, so the issue is off-limits and a root that could lead for some to conversion, or at least result in progress in sanctification is blocked off.

My heart is deceitful and wicked. It has been a complex and time-consuming process to unravel the effects of music and experiences in my own pilgrimage, the process God helping me has, I trust, been fruitful and rewarding, but for those who are discouraged from pursuing it, the result can only be more fuzzy comprehensive Christianity when non-biblical means are adopted and the attendant results dignified with a spiritual status they do not merit. There is so much more that could be said but we must move on.

My next heading is not by might and power, the charismatic issue. The unwillingness to be rigorous in the area of music points to a more general and underlying unwillingness to separate from worldliness and error. Human might and power intrude into the building of the kingdom of God. Coalitions and numbers, the stuff of might and power, replace the spiritual exercise of separation from vital error and the world. This is a key area where the intent of the New Calvinism falls short of biblical expectations, for instead of taking up a position of antagonism against doctrines and teachings that weaken and endanger the health of the church, the New Calvinism shows indifferentism or positive acceptance.

Now entertain, no doubt, that the New Calvinism has no time for health-and-wealth teaching. Its people regularly preach against it, it has won people out of those positions in the United States but Newfrontiers might not be so antagonistic to health-and-wealth teachers though we would expect many friends of the Reformed charismatic position in the UK to be decidedly against it. And as our findings to date already tell us, and as the name Reformed charismatic explicitly tells us, the wider matter of baptism in the Spirit,

tongues for today, prophecy and apostles, are not issues that are going to be allowed to hinder fellowship and cooperative endeavor. These are relegated to secondary issues.

Collin Hansen on the experience of CJ Mahaney, the leader of Sovereign Grace churches and overtly charismatic, rejected by many in the charismatic movement because of his espousal of Calvinism, Collin Hansen reports and I quote him here, "Calvinism remains a tough sell in charismatic communities that prioritize concerns other than doctrine. Mahaney and like-minded theologians such as Wayne Grudem and Sam Storms have had much more success at coaxing Calvinists away from their traditional cessationism. These Calvinists profess to be 'charismatics wearing seat belts,' to borrow Mark Driscoll's phrase."

We saw last time that John MacArthur has dropped some of his opposition to the charismatic movement. This realignment is made clear by a man called Nathan Busenitz, associate pastor and assistant to John MacArthur at Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, CA, and a teacher at the Master's Seminary. In a paper called "Now that's the Spirit," subtitled, "Assessing and addressing evangelical charismatics," the sea change was clearly enunciated back in January, 2006. Nathan Busenitz asks as his final question in his paper, "So why does Grace Church partner with conservative continuationist leaders when our church has taken such a strong stance against charismatic teaching?" He then goes on to supply the answer and I quote him at length, "However," he says, "for those who agree on the essentials of the gospel, there are times in which it is appropriate to overlook differences on second-level doctrines in order to stand united on first-level doctrines. While not compromising what we believe to be the clearest and most accurate interpretation of Scripture, mainly the cessationist position, the leadership of Grace Church has chosen to welcome certain conservative continuationist leaders because of their shared commitment to the biblical gospel. Though our church might not be able to participate in every ministry venue with these men, the leadership of Grace Church has chosen to partner with them in standing for the truth in a day when the gospel is under attack. In a world that is becoming increasingly anti-Christian, it is important for us to link in some way around what is most important. So the bottom line is this: we want to link arms around the gospel with those who affirm the true gospel even if there are some important doctrinal differences in other areas."

Now those first-level doctrines referred to would include the inerrancy of Scripture, the atonement, the literal bodily resurrection of Christ, justification by faith alone, but the second-level issues including belief in charismatic gifts, would not be sufficient to stop inviting a charismatic person to speak at the seminary or in the church, at least on an occasional basis. Now while one can understand the catholicity of spirit, this is not sufficient. While assent to doctrines like justification by faith is vital, it is not sufficient. Likewise while assent to the divinity of Christ, his exclusivity in order to be saved is crucial, it, too, is not sufficient. Why? Because as with the music, it is equally vital to have some understanding of what spiritual experience is. If a person has a different view of what a spiritual experience is, they're going to look at the same evidence and come to a different conclusion.

Back in 1995, John Piper, for instance, had been found with some of his staff receiving the Toronto Blessing without too much difficulty or too great reservation. Prior to that, he had taken 58 of his people to the Anaheim Holiness Unto the Lord Conference in January, 1990. This was one of the seminal events catapulting the Kansas City Prophets into the public domain. Their false teachings, false prophecies, and occultic practices created huge controversy in the 1990s and indeed through to this day. John Piper did not return from those meetings perturbed and anxious but instead was hungry to see a move of God in his own church, basically welcoming what he had seen with a few provisos. We might have hoped that the Lakeland Revival would have been a cause where John Piper could have expressed some vehemence and distance himself. This, after all, had some of the most outrageous antics seen on the Pentecostal circuit with the heavily tattooed Todd Bentley dispensing blessings by shouting, "Bam!" and pretending to kick and punch people with angel Emma on hand to guide and the usual hype accompanying it, this invited condemnation of the most clear and unequivocal kind. But it never came. Invited to comment on Lakeland, this is in part the reply in an edited transcript of an audio response that was posted. He said this, "I don't know anything firsthand about it. I've not heard any sermon from it nor read anything directly written by the pastor leading it. Everything I know about it comes through the secondhand bloggers, some of whom are balanced and some of whom are quite critical."

For anyone who has followed this story will know that there was quickly a lot of information available. YouTube footage showed that what was happening had nothing to do with the Spirit of God. Even the evident connections between Todd Bentley and the extreme charismatics from the New Apostolic Reformation did not set any alarm bells ringing. It was quite extraordinary that in not being convinced by the critical comments that were in the public domain. So what was his advice? I quote him, "So I think I should just tell you to check it out for yourself because I don't know enough firsthand to comment on it." Well, that's a very tame response which given the weight of responsibility that he carries in the United States and beyond leaves people shortchanged.

It gets no better when he goes on to say this, "Maybe something general I could say, however, is that I'm not as knee-jerk negative about weird revivals as some people are. And I say 'weirdness' in inverted commas because that's the word that has been used to describe some of the kinds of phenomena that are there. I want to test things not by the weirdness of the phenomena where the people are falling or laughing or whether gold is growing in their teeth, I want to test it by whether or not they preach the truth." He then lists the questions he would like to ask the people involved to which, I'm sure, he would receive positive answers back.

Later on when Bentley's marital unfaithfulness emerges, he comes back into the debate but only by largely quoting Charisma Magazine's J. Lee Grady's negative comments. The phenomena which so palpably had been worked up by loud music and the extravagant and wild behavior of Todd Bentley would seem to still have been largely okay.

Newfrontiers, despite the ways in which it is being assiduously courted by elements of the more conservative wing of evangelicalism remains wedded to its seeking out of

exotic signs and wonders. Terry Virgo twitched when Lakeland appeared on the horizon and was definitely warming towards it until Todd Bentley's infidelities came to light and perhaps saved Terry Virgo an airfare to Florida. They still have on their website sermons preached by Rob Rufus at their 2006 and 2007 summer conferences. Rob Rufus reckons that anyone finding fault with Lakeland is on very dangerous ground while he, himself, promotes being slain in the Spirit and a wide range of unbiblical phenomena.

So these people will offer assurance where we would sound a warning. They would see a work of God where we can see danger. We've already seen this in the case of musically inspired experiences for when one adds to this those experiences which come through being prayed for, having hands laid on us, or through some self-induced trance, the fault lines become very significant. In the end, the very issue of Christian conversion is under threat. Nathan Busenitz, like our political leaders here in the United Kingdom, swallowing political differences in the national interest, maybe optimistic things will turn out just fine. Others of us are less sanguine, rather we see this refusal to set clear boundaries and willingness to embrace comprehensive Christianity as the high road to more of the same with further disastrous consequences for people.

Now my next heading: separation further failures. It's not only on the matter of spiritual experience and worship that unwillingness to separate from worldly methods is evident. Some of the main architects of the New Calvinism link arms with people who palpably do not preach the gospel. To general amazement and almost disbelief, back in March last year it was announced that John Piper had invited Rick Warren to speak at his Desiring God Conference which happened in the October of last year. This news came as a thunderclap and generated and still does generate much discussion on the internet, "How could the man so many people looked up to as their authority on the Bible and having introduced them to admire Jonathan Edwards, the Reformers and the Puritans, how could he embrace Rick Warren, the very archetype of pragmatic, doctrine-light, shallow and compromised Christianity?" I have not the time to detail all Rick Warren's mistakes and wrong positions; I've spoken elsewhere on "The Purpose Driven Church" and "The Purpose Driven Life," and I'll refer you to the voluminous literature and internet material on the subject.

It seemed incredible to many that John Piper could have done such a thing but his track record up to that point was not too encouraging. He was happy for his people to associate with the Promise Keepers movement which sported ecumenical credentials and featured some of then prominent people from the Vineyard School of Prophets. He'd previously designated the new Pauline perspective as a confusing but not false gospel. Inviting Douglas Wilson to his Desiring God Conference in 2009 had caused controversy again. Wilson is associated with the Federal Vision teaching which basically asserts that membership in the church is adequate to be sure of salvation. Likewise there is John Piper's embrace of the controversial Mark Driscoll whose risque and offensive language and far too forthright sermon content on sexual matters also earned him a speaking engagement at Desiring God. Various people signed up from supporting Piper over these various aberrations, now to welcome Rick Warren whose theology and approach stands

opposed to everything valuable that the Puritans and the Reformers taught has been, for some, an invitation too many.

But there are other places where the desire to make a statement or be a co-belligerent with gospel-denying Christians so-called shows more trust in might and power than in the Spirit. Wayne Grudem, Tim Keller, Al Mohler, Ligon Duncan signed the 2009 Manhattan Declaration along with Roman Catholics and Orthodox people, acknowledging them to be Christians in the battle together to uphold life, marriage, and religious liberty. This reluctance to separate from doctrinal error and rank apostasy is a window into the soul of this movement. Why is there such reluctance to be removed away from teachers of error? Indeed, why is there almost a fatal attraction to have them onside with us? Can they with any integrity really speak up the place of Spurgeon if they're unwilling to do as he did and to stand apart from those who give comfort to error? Reformed distinctives are blown away like autumn leaves in the desire to be part of something bigger that does not limit the positive appeal.

What is more, there is a reluctance to follow the line of Spurgeon and practice secondary separation. In other words, this is to separate from those who maybe sound in their own practice but who embrace those who are enemies of the health of the true church. By being allied to people in ministries that promote error there is a sharing in the sin and damage of those ministries, but the thought of weakening the numerical strength and potency of the movement seems to be a step too far. Better to keep together and be thought broad and accommodating than be labeled a fundamentalist striving for a pure church. John Piper said as much in his defense inviting Rick Warren, but the instinct to build a coalition rather than on a God and separate from those who give room to error has bitten deep. Indeed, it's been a huge disappointment. There has been no comment made by other protagonists within the movement in the aftermath of Piper's invitation of Warren.

When Peter took a step that maybe it looked like he no longer believed in justification by faith alone, the Apostle Paul acted. Galatians 2:11, "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." But no such reproof has been offered publicly before them all. Indeed, a week or so after the announcement that Rick Warren was coming to Desiring God together for the gospel held its conference entitled the Unadjusted Gospel. Many of the big names in the New Calvinism with their know better opportunity, one would have thought to make the point that is doing damage to the gospel to publicly renounce with those whose methods and message is a false gospel. But there was no public reproof, not any apology given or repentance shown.

The combinations get quite dizzying. Tim Keller is willing to embrace the other bastion of seeker sensitivity, Willow Creek and its leader Bill Hybels. Mark Driscoll preached at Robert Schuller's Crystal Cathedral, the home of self-esteem teaching and a sin-free approach to the soul. That caused consternation to some of his friends, especially when his message failed to convey any challenge to those who were there, or correction of the unbiblical message associated with that church. While apparently they're willing to weigh in against the health-and-wealth movement, everyone else is pretty much okay. The

dangers to young Christians exposed to these ministries and teachings are discounted and the honor of God is brought low by not putting distance between themselves and these preachers. This is not the faith or the practice of our fathers.

My next heading is this: keeping in with the world. There are further troubling aspects about New Calvinism, known fears that might and power are intruding into the realm where the Spirit should be. Jeremy Walker has wondered whether too much is being made of people and personalities. I wonder the same too. Platforms are dangerous things both for those who stand on them and for those who look at them. Pedestals are not for Christian ministers, neither should the temptation be to put them there either.

It was revealing to eavesdrop on the world of the bloggers when Dr. Peter Masters published a piece in the *Sword and Trowel* on the worldly nature of the New Calvinism. The affront that some felt when Dr. Masters challenged the views and practice of some of the main personalities was very interesting to observe. It has to be said that many share Dr. Masters' perspective and felt it was a timely word. Others reacted caustically and negatively. Indeed, some in their responses verged on the abusive. Some showed little desire to stop and search their hearts and to consider the merits of what was being said. Some referred to the affront they felt that the leaders they looked up to were being challenged but then when John Piper embraced Rick Warren, the wisdom of Dr. Masters' words were appreciated a little more.

I have personally witnessed the hostility that arises when the practice and theology of one of the big names is challenged. The attack dogs are set off and negative publicity campaign can get started up. Too much emotional and spiritual stock is invested in people often at the expense of actually listening to what they're teaching. Intellectual big-hitters they may be, goal-scorers with the capacity to shock and awe they may be, this work is not however about creating personalities and celebrities to make us feel good or make others feel good. If people are wrong, they are wrong whoever they are, however big their church is or their influence. We need a work of the Spirit, not the might and power of men.

What might underpin some of this worldliness, this coalition building at the expense of sound doctrine and practice? Perhaps we can find a part explanation in the espousal by some of new covenant theology, in other words, the view that we are not to look to the 10 Commandments for our rule of life. Desiring God is drawn towards a more new covenant treatment of the place of the law, in other words, the law is not regarded as the guide and rule for the Christian. A more nebulous love for Christ is allowed to function in its place which allows the person to add new personal laws or to take away laws. There is not always, for instance, a holding to the fourth commandment and observance of the Sabbath. The result whether such people intend it or not, is a downplaying of the Lord's day and the importance of church attendance.

Now Newfrontiers has long been suspected of antinomianism; the exaggerated teaching about enjoying God's grace eliminates the place of the law. I recall seeing the website of a Newfrontiers church in the northeast of England which having had a baptismal service

on the Saturday decided not to have a service on the Sunday. Others ditch the evening service when it was World Cup Finals Sunday and had a football quiz for all the family instead.

John Hosier, one of the Newfrontiers theologians in his book "Christ's Radiant Church" writes this in regards to Romans 7. I quote him, "There is a common view that although the law cannot justify us, we will be sanctified by the law. In other words, having become Christians we now live out our Christian life by being obedient to the law. What is the result of this approach? Quite simply we are back under law but Romans 7:4 has told us that the way we bear fruit for God is not by living out the law but rather by living out our relationship with Christ. As believers, we have died to the law and so it is clear that we're not meant to go back to it. We do not serve God by the old way of the written code, now we serve God in a new way by the Spirit. For the Christian the Holy Spirit has replaced the law so we now live in Christ and Christ lives in us. This is life in the Spirit and therefore a life that should more and more demonstrate and represent Christ." But it does not seem so good when one considers the canceling of Sunday services. Indeed, my own time among Newfrontiers churches revealed at times a ruthless business-minded streak and self-belief that did not accord with humility and love nor with the moral imperatives of Scripture.

"We cannot be deceived" has been the mantra among some of these people. This optimism seems more grounded in the flesh than in the Spirit. It seems more fueled by might and power than truth spiritual experience in grace. Without the check of the law the capacity for self-examination and repentance seems lacking and the indulgences that are tolerated are greater. There are refugees from movements like Sovereign Grace Ministries who make pointed comments about the rough handling they have received. Rites and handsome personalities on the platform are not a guarantee that practice on the ground will not be distinctly flaky and verge on spiritual abuse.

Take, as an instance, the Newfrontiers approach to church planting. David Stroud is the UK leader of Newfrontiers. His wife, we might note in passing, is Philippa Stroud, who narrowly failed to win Sutton and Cheam for the conservatives at the recent election, and is now special advisor to Iain Duncan Smith in the Department for Work and Pensions. David Stroud's recent book, "Planting Churches, Changing Communities," which came out in 2009 shows how much the issue is about impressing people with might and power rather than preaching. Indeed, they go to great lengths not to witness or preach in the early days leading up to the launch of a new church.

Let me quote him. He tells us this, "You should be hosting lots of parties, social events, picnics and anything else you think your team will invite friends to. I've often asked people if we organize such and such an event, would you be able to invite your unbelieving friends as long as we promise not to talk about Jesus? Most people says, yes, and bring people along. I've found that our guests will always work out somewhere along the line that we are starting a church but bringing them into a fun environment with laughing, smiling people is a much more effective way of drawing them in than trying prematurely to share the gospel with them."

Now I have nothing against a little humor and laughter in the right place, at the right time, but this sounds like might and power of human wisdom and trying to impress people by being amazingly cool and relaxed. It slights the honor of God, that we put ourselves ahead of his Son and deny his glory by putting him out of view; this can be an embarrassment to the message we are trying to convey. There is a lot of advice in his book about getting momentum going and a sense of purpose but we are told not to worry too much about the preaching.

I quote him again, "In the early days," he advises leaders, "do not feel pressurized to spend too long working on sermons. Use whatever help you can get from others and develop a team of preachers. Use guest speakers from nearby Newfrontiers churches. Do not let the burden of the preparation distract you from gathering people, developing community, and training leaders." The very thing which is the power of God unto salvation is to be neglected in the aim of creating an atmosphere of progress and excitement.

Friends, these are worldly matters. It is no surprise, then, to find that Christ Church Central London, the church that David Stroud leads, should have laid on an Alpha event at the plush SWAY Club in Covent Garden where the main speaker was Andy Duncan, formerly the chief executive of Channel 4 who professes to be a Christian. How credible that profession is when one sees the output of Channel 4 under his tenure I will leave to others to judge. But this much we will permit ourselves to say, that this deliberate effort to impress by hosting an expensive venue tainted by its connections with ungodliness and having a celebrity to address them is a symptom that reliance has been placed on anything and anyone but the Holy Spirit.

So in conclusion there is so much more that could be said on this subject. It is a developing picture and it is a vital one for us to understand it. This movement is not going to go away. While recent tensions will test its durability, early indications are that people desperately want to see it succeed and obviously feel there is more to be gained from papering over differences and biting their tongues over their reservations in the hope that unity will build strength and then will the movement make an impact. I, for one, am not convinced by it. Worship and the charismatic movement are not minor matters. They impact directly on the nature of the Christianity that is portrayed as authentic the interpretation of spiritual experience, the conduct of evangelism and the pursuit of holiness. In all areas there is an indication of compromise.

While the Calvinism is sincerely held as far as it goes, underneath there is every indication that there is a version of comprehensive Christianity where everyone who reckons themselves a Christian is in irrespective of their attitude to the world and their spiritual experience. The place of the Holy Spirit risks being relegated and obscured. Instead a more might and power driven phenomena seems to be emerging where impressive music, impressive intellects, impressive personalities, and impressive movements are taking precedence. If the leadership can be so undiscerning and uncritical of their practice, we can expect little better from those who follow them. For sure there

will be some who are brought into a much closer contact with sound doctrine, we must be ready to offer them a helping hand when the contradictions in the movement perhaps begin to weigh heavily upon their consciences and minds. But for us, complacency is never the right response. If we lose our delight in the truth, we are on a sure path to ruin. We need to ensure that we, too, are spiritual people, our reliance is upon the Lord. Better then to continue to look unto the Lord to supply the help we need to build his church by his appointed means. Avoiding worldliness requires daily vigilance. Honoring God is a lifelong experience. May he aid us in this day of small things and enable us to be loyal to his truth. Amen.