

St. Andrew's (JKP) Monthly Newsletter
April, 2010

Edification: “Why I am a missional + evangelical + post/protestant + liberal/conservative + mystical/poetic + biblical + charismatic/contemplative + fundamentalist/Calvinist + Anabaptist/Anglican + Methodist + catholic + green + incarnational + depressed-yet-hopeful + emergent + unfinished Christian.” So goes the hopelessly confused subtitle of emergent guru Brian McLaren’s book “[A Generous Orthodoxy](#)”. Pastor Miranda recently referred to the movement known as The Emergent (Emerging) Church. McLaren coined the term and has shaped the movement. In a very real sense this movement is the incarnation of all that Francis Schaeffer warned us about. As the subtitle tediously reveals **Humanity** is the center of all things. Whatever **Humanity** wants to believe - even a direct contradiction (*liberal/conservative?*) that’s OK. Do away with absolutes, accept that we can’t really know anything for sure (although we’re *pretty* sure that we can’t know *anything* for sure) and plunge yourself into mysticism – mostly medieval, and you’re Emergent. The unintended consequence is (will be) to plummet below what Schaeffer called “[The Line of Despair](#)”. If there are no absolutes, if truth is unknowable or non-existent, if there is no ultimate meaning what’s left? The apostle Paul summed-up this same dilemma 2,000 years ago; “[For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not raised. And if Christ is not raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.](#)” If there is no absolute knowable truth all is futility and despair. So how could this “emergent” mush appeal to anyone? See below, in the “Encourage” portion.

Events/Information: We’re meeting every other Wednesday at 7:30p.m. at Jan Jones house for bible study. Our next fellowship meal will be 06/27/10.

Encourage: The Emergent Church’s greatest appeal is to young adults, typically from conservative Christian homes. As they leave home to establish their own lives these young adults don’t want to leave their religion completely behind. In many cases they do want to leave behind the “dogmatism” and “absolutism” many feel marked their parent’s faith. Many also want to “engage” culture not denounce and disown it, again as some feel their parent’s did. Into the void steps the Emergent Church with its “[curvy, ambiguous orthodoxy](#)” – to quote McLaren. Doctrine and truth claims are almost entirely absent. The focus is what they call being “missional” and “communal”. They’re enamored with monasticism redefined and reapplied; “[Monastic values of hospitality and community appeal to young people today who are weary of the culture’s values of consumerism and individualism](#)” (emergent pastor). Yet the grave danger is abandoning known revealed truth as historically taught in the creeds and confessions. We must press upon our youth the simple fact that truth is knowable – “true truth” as Schaeffer called it; that we believe what we believe because it is true – it is reality. We need to help them understand that a life with no reference to absolute truth is futility and despair. One emergent pastor was asked by what standard the movement was operating he quipped; “[We’re building the airplane as we fly it.](#)” I’m no aerospace engineer, but that won’t work. It’ll crash eventually into the mountain of revealed truth. We don’t want our kids on that plane!