

The Need for Evangelical Repentance and Reformation

Saturday, 09/03/22 08:00 AM CT • 54:00

Host: David Wheaton 00:08

The need for evangelical repentance and reformation. That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a nonprofit listener supported radio ministry. We are able to broadcast on the radio station, website or app in which you are listening today because of the support of listeners like you. You can connect with us by calling our toll free number 1-888-646-2233, writing to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331, or visiting TheChristianWorldview.org.

The term, "Evangelical" once meant a Christian who believed in the authority of Scripture and the call to evangelize the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ. But the devil, so to speak, is in the details of how that has played out over the decades. Today, many Evangelical churches and evangelical parachurch organizations whether colleges, seminaries, publishing and music industries, camps, conferences, films, evangelism outreaches, social work, and the list goes on, form such a wide tent in doctrine and practice as to defy definition of what an evangelical actually is, but worse, in many cases are dishonoring to God.

This is a very bad development. Misrepresenting God and compromising His Word is egregious sin. Paul told his understudy Timothy to, "accurately handle the word of truth," II Timothy 2:15. He didn't tell Timothy to use creative, man centered methodologies to reach the culture, but rather to, "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching. Persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. That's I Timothy 4:16. Pastor Travis Allen of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado, joins us today on The Christian Worldview to discuss the need for evangelical repentance and reformation. He will explain how the evangelical movement arrived, where it is today and what must be done to avoid ending in apostasy. Let's get straight to the interview with Pastor Travis Allen.

Travis, thank you for coming back on The Christian Worldview this week to talk about the need for evangelical repentance and reformation. And recently on the program, Pastor Steve Lawson said something like this, this is a paraphrase. But he says, As goes the pulpit, so goes the church, so goes the nation. And you at your church at Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado

did a conference last September of 2021 called, The Reforming Evangelicalism Conference. All the messages we have linked at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org that will go right over to your website where listeners can hear them. And in the first message, you entitled it, The Need for Evangelical Reformation. And I'm just going to quote from some of your words out of that message today and just follow up with questions because I really was struck by the strength of this message and the specificity of covering where evangelicalism came from, what it's become, and really the need for repentance and reformation.

And so you start off by saying, "First, I want to trace some evidences of evangelical drift, showing the decline. Second, I want to issue a biblical warning to evangelicals in hopes of repentance." And you give some history of how the evangelical movement came about, quoting Ian Murray, the well known Scottish writer who is elderly now, but he has been very clear and insightful about what's happened in evangelicalism and you quote him by saying, "By the 18th century, so this would be the 1700s, while the profession of the national churches in England and Scotland remained Orthodox, there are many pulpits within those churches, from which no gospel was heard. And when the Evangel was recovered, a term was necessary to distinguish it's preachers from others. And these were the called Evangelicals."

So maybe you could just explain a little more about what was taking place there historically in England and Scotland, and how the gospel preaching was getting lost, and how this happens today, where you may look at a church online, and you may see this seemingly orthodox statement of faith for our church, but when you attend the church or go there for a time, you realize the church has really nothing about that orthodox statement of faith. It's full of doctrinal error. And there's really not a lot of gospel preaching at all.

Guest: Travis Allen 05:36

Well, David, first of all, thank you for having me back on your program. We talk about this sometimes with regard to evangelical seminaries and seminaries being conservative and faithful places where we pastors want to send our up and coming young men into training for ministry. And we always say this, we say liberals don't start seminaries, they kill conservative ones. And that is the pattern that you find in a faithful church or a faithful seminary or a faithful conservative institution. And the drift happens over time as what we are to conserve. Those who are there to be watchful and conserve, they fail to watch carefully, or time goes by and they hire or bring in people who are less committed. They can say the same things and pass with the bone a few days and get into the organization. But they don't hold the same convictions. They may be able to parrot the what of the doctrinal statement, they may be able to parrot the orthodoxy, but they don't have an understanding of why. They don't hold to the same convictions deeply.

And so it's inevitable that people will enter into an organization, a church, an institution, and eventually cause that institution to drift. And we've seen that all through church history, we see it in biblical history as well, that it's so important to keep going back to the foundations and the fundamentals, and to preach those things over and over again. And that's why a faithful pulpit has to be doing that. It has to be intentionally connected to the roots in church history, to the confessions of faith and the Creed's of the Christian faith, to be intentional about that, not just again, quoting the what but teaching people the why. Why do we hold to these truths? Why is it important to understand that this is the gospel, and that these elements are the gospel, and not that? So we have to do teaching by positive declaration and also negative contrast.

Host: David Wheaton 07:52

Travis Allen with us today on The Christian Worldview. The pastor of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado. Further on just a little later in your message on, The Need for Evangelical Reformation, you said, "By the end of the 19th century, so now this would be the 1800s liberalism had entered the Protestant mainline denominations and anti supernatural evolutionary presuppositions of the Enlightenment period, such as the denial of miracles and the supernatural, like the virgin birth of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the denial of and this is a big one, penal substitutionary atonement, the denial of inspiration, and inerrancy of Scripture.

The Evangelical reaction to the encroachment of these ideas known as modernism was called fundamentalism. So that was the reaction to this liberalism or modernism that was coming up. It was called fundamentalism, rising up to oppose encroaching liberalism, reasserting the fundamental truths of Christianity." One more paragraph, "The liberal fundamentalist conflict took center stage in the 1925 Scopes Trial. It led to an exodus of Christians from liberalised institutions. And you give the example of J. Gresham Machen. He led an exodus of faculty from Princeton Seminary to start Westminster Theological Seminary in 1929. And Christians left the Protestant mainline denominations to form new denominations, you say, or to become independent churches."

Okay, just a little more on this because this is interesting. "The liberal versus fundamentalist conflict could be quite acerbic, which means sharp and forthright in the conflict against each other, and many grew weary of that fight. After World War II, here it is, a new evangelicalism was forming up to find a middle way between the doctrinal concerns of fundamentalists and the social sympathies of the liberals. On the one hand, new evangelicals wanted to protect the fundamental tenants of orthodoxy like inspiration of Scripture, inerrancy and authority of Scripture, the supernatural nature of the Bible and the new birth, the centrality of the gospel and the exclusivity of salvation in Jesus Christ, and Christ mandate to the church to evangelize."

Last sentence. "On the other hand, new evangelicals did not want to appear intolerant and pugnacious to the world." That was a very interesting few paragraphs in your message. So, Travis, explain more how the evangelical movement formed out of this conflict between liberalism and fundamentalism. And was there a flaw in their reasoning? I guess I'm specifically referring to that last sentence, not wanting to appear intolerant or pugnacious,

Guest: Travis Allen 11:10

Sometimes what becomes exposed over time as liberalism on the surface, they say their desire is to evangelize is to reach out to the world, because they want to reach out to a world that's changing. It's becoming more modern, it's becoming more scientific. They want to drop some of the elements from the Bible that makes the Bible look foolish to an unbelieving world. And so under the maybe the guise of wanting to reach out to the last and win the world and win the world for Christ, they tried to mute the supernatural, they tried to mute the insistence that the Bible is absolutely perfect in an area without flaw, because by, "scientific measure," the Bible is not scientific. It's Supernatural, not naturalistic.

So people say that they want to reach the lost, and so let's try to soft sell. Let's try to mute these clear elements of the supernatural and clear elements of the God who is. Let's try to mute some of that and make the Bible more palatable, make Christianity more palatable to a modern world. Really what I think those preachers and peddlers of a new kind of evangelicalism or really what is liberalism, I think what they're revealing is the fact that they don't believe the Bible themselves. They don't hold those convictions strongly, and they're embarrassed by those things in the Scripture. You take some of the elements of what's going on today, in the social justice movement, and you take some of the, you know, whether it's an issue of slavery or an issue of feminism in our culture, you take some of those hot button issues and you go back into scripture, and you see that Scripture does address issues of slavery. And there there is slavery evident in the Old Testament, the law regulates slavery.

There's a very clear understanding in the Bible of a difference in roles between men and women, and a strong emphasis on male leadership, and that women are to be following underneath men, underneath their leadership. But a lot of Evangelicals today are embarrassed by some of the things that the Bible says, rather than going into the Bible and actually explaining it to the culture, which requires them to understand it, to fear God first and realize that whatever the Scripture says, it's absolutely perfect and wise and good, they treat the Bible with superficiality. They don't understand it.

So when they approached the culture, they just want to tuck those more difficult things in their minds about the Bible away, so that the culture is not offended. Same thing is happening right now with homosexuality and the LGBTQ movement. There are those evangelicals that wants to say that, you know, just the act of homosexuality is sinful, but not the thoughts, the desires

of homosexuality, that's not a sin issue. That's not true. That's not what the Bible teaches. So I think we just need to fundamentally we need to fear the Lord. We need to realize that what's in Scripture is inerrant and it's authoritative. And we need to be unapologetic about that. And as we go into the Scripture and interpret it in the fear of the Lord, we're going to realize what God teaches is good and right and true and wise. And then we proclaim that to the world and let the Lord deal with the heart.

Host: David Wheaton 14:51

So well said. Pastor Travis Allen with us today here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program, the pastor of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado, their website we have a linked at TheChristianWorldview.org, but the direct link to them is gracegreeley.org. And we also have the messages we're talking about today from this conference, The Reforming Evangelicalism Conference, linked at our website. You can go there and hear these two excellent messages by our guest today, Travis, and there's others on there as well from the conference. And the message we're discussing today is the need for evangelical reformation. Okay, we need to take a short break for some ministry announcements. Stay tuned. There's much more coming up with Pastor Travis Allen right after this.

Featured Children's Resources 15:37

Scripture commands that children are to be brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Offering Biblically sound resources for children is one of our top ministry priorities. At our store at TheChristianWorldview.org, you will find carefully selected children's Bibles and books along with video and audio resources.

Check out the Bible Infographics for Kids books, Little Pilgrims Progress, and the popular Adam Raccoon set. Theo is a 15 episode video series addressing key doctrines of the faith that is a must see for children and adults. Satan and the world are bent on capturing the heart and mind of your child. Instead, get sound resources that will train them up in the way they should go. Browse and order at TheChristianWorldview.org. Or give us a call for recommendations at 1-888-646-2233. That's 1-888-646-2233 or TheChristianWorldview.org.

Featured Resource: My Boy Ben 16:37

For a limited time, we are offering My Boy, Ben for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. The book is the true story of a Yellow Lab that I had back when I was competing in the professional tennis tour. It's about relationships with Ben, my parents, with a childhood friend I would eventually marry, but ultimately with God who causes all things, even the hard things to work together for good. You can order a signed and personalized copy for yourself or for your friend who enjoys a good story, loves dogs, sports, or the outdoors and most of all needs to hear about God's grace and the Gospel.

My Boy, Ben is owned by The Christian Worldview. It's 264 pages, hardcover, and retails for \$24.95. To order go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Host: David Wheaton 17:35

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry.

Now back to the interview with Pastor Travis Allen. Now Travis, you go on to say in this message that, "The word evangelical now refers to any non Catholic, non mainline Protestant religious group that sees the Bible and Jesus as centrally important. It follows a formulaic pattern of a message they call, "The gospel," and there's an evangelistic impulse to influence people to join their cause, church, or movement." And then you say, "I trust you see the problem by defining evangelicalism in such broad terms, it can embrace everyone from Joel Osteen, Beth Moore and Steven Furtick on one hand. [And I'll even add to that, you know, people like Ron Sider and Jim Wallace of Sojourners all the way over to the other side where people like John MacArthur, Phil Johnson, you had Don Green, the conservative pastor at your conference] While seeing the Bible and Jesus as centrally important is a good thing, every true Christian is defined that way, it's not narrow enough. Mormons can say the same thing as can Roman Catholics. There are no standards and no accountability for any evangelical with regard to how they handle scripture, how they interpret Jesus, as long as those matters are, "centrally important."

And so the last paragraph here, then I'll ask you a question. "The formulaic gospel pattern you hear in evangelical churches go something like this, [I think you hit the nail on the head here] Something is wrong and needs to be fixed in your life. Jesus is the answer to your problem. And Salvation means happiness. Want to come to Jesus for a happy life and heaven after? Some version of that message comes from that basic palette of paints, allowing for quite a bit of creativity, adaptation and innovation, so long as you can find a Bible verse to attach to it and you can clap loudly for Jesus." Travis, why is this formulaic gospel pattern, it's kind of wide and shallow, why is that not enough and really, ultimately not honoring to God?

Guest: Travis Allen 20:17

Well, I think the reason it's not enough is because it really isn't faithful to the message of Scripture. The entire message of the gospel, what's good news, it's in contrast to very, very bad news. The good news is that we can be saved from the wrath of God against the unrighteousness of men. And we're all caught up in that unrighteousness. And so the bad news is just my very life and in my living, I'm an offense to a holy and righteous God, whose standard of righteousness is perfect. Jesus said in Matthew 5:48, Be therefore perfect as your

heavenly Father is perfect. Listen, no one qualifies, no one measures up. And so we realize that we are living in an offense to a holy God, we're under his condemnation and under his wrath for our sin. And that the consequence of that is that we will be remanded to an eternal hell, and the eternal conscious torment being punished by God.

So that's the problem that we face is that being sinful creatures born into this world guilty of Adam's sin, having a sin nature and then proving that sin nature through the choices that we make and things that we're willfully desirous of, we commit sins against God in thought, word, and deed, we commit sins of omission and commission against this Holy God, and this Holy God has been nothing but good and wise and kind. He's granted us everything. And he's put everything in nature and all creation to point to Himself to His own glory, so that we would be fully satisfied in Him and rejoice in Him.

And yet, what do we do? We take what he's given us, and we blaspheme the Creator, we turn away from Him. So the message of the Bible, the entirety of the gospel is all about the glory of God. It's the glory of God in His judgment of sinners. And it's the glory of God in His salvation of his people, in his kindness, in his grace. Everything is about the glory of God. But when you hear the most gospel presentations that I hear today, whether it's informally in a church, whether it's online, whether it's in an article, whether it's on the news media, most gospel presentations I hear today, it's all about the human being. It's a man centered gospel. It's all about promoting your own happiness, or your own prosperity, or being the best you. God's so interested in you, and He wants to give you more and more and elevates you and make you more prosperous and prominent. And that is not the gospel. That's the devil's gospel, that it's all about the creature. The Bible's gospel is that God is to be glorified. And he will get glory in all that he does, whether it's through the condemnation of the sinner, or through the grace that He gives to His people, the grace that He gives to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.

Host: David Wheaton 23:24

So well said. Thank you for that. Travis Travis Allen with us today on The Christian Worldview. We just highly encourage you to hear both of these messages that Travis gave at, The Reforming Evangelicalism Conference. They would really help give greater discernment about what is going on within the evangelical church. So Travis, you go from talking about some history, as we've discussed, to getting into the drift that has taken place within evangelicalism, and you talk about six or seven areas of drift, and we'll get into several of them, not all but the first one you say is the moral drift. And you say public scandals have stained evangelical reputation, immoral behavior among high profile evangelicals, and you name names here, like Ted Haggard, he was formerly the president of the National Association of Evangelicals. There was a sexual immoral situation going on with him where he stepped down. Tullian Tchividjian, who was the grandson of I believe Billy Graham, had to leave his church for immoral scandal. Bill Hybels, of course, Willow Creek, Jerry Falwell, Jr, out at Liberty University, Carl Lentz, high

profile pastor with Hillsong. And of course, almost everyone's heard about what happened to Ravi Zacharias,. He had one of the most prominent ministries in the world.

Then you go on to say, immoral leadership by men like Mark Driscoll and James McDonald, who were both founding council members of the Gospel Coalition. Then you go on to say divorce, pornography, fornication, cohabitation, and now the LGBTQ plus movement. Some evangelicals have capitulated on homosexuality and you reference, Beth Moore and Max Lucado, who have very soft stances on that particular issue. Others have just outright apostatized like Jen Hatmaker, who is a popular podcaster. Also Joshua Harris, who wrote the book, *I Kissed Dating Goodbye*, just totally left the faith.

And then you say, on the cultural drift, the second point, the appropriation of worldly culture, in order to be relevant and gain influence is another problem within the evangelical movement, from hip hop hipster culture of Hillsong, to country western culture of the, "Cowboy Church." They defend these cultural appropriation, let's call it, as a strategy to win the culture. But it looks more like they just love the world. They're not calling sinners out of sinful culture, to repent, and live holy lives. So Travis, do you think that the moral and cultural drift, these first two points you made on the drift going on, is occurring more now than let's say 100 or 200 years ago in let's say, Christianity in America? And if so, why? And the follow up question to this is, one thing you didn't mention that I think has had a major impact is the impact of taking the form of music from the world, and which has really become the mainstay of the evangelical church over the last 50 or 60 years that has had an enormous impact. I would like to know what you think about that as well?

Guest: Travis Allen 26:45

Well, with regard to the first question of whether this is more prominent now than 100 or 200 years ago, or whatnot, that's a really hard question for me to answer since I didn't live 100 or 200 years ago, but I'm just living through this cultural moment. It does seem to me that when there are scandals, and whatever's going on, it seems like a spread of information because of the internet, because of telecommunication technology. We're just so connected, and we see everything that's going on for bad and worse. It does seem like the scandals and the drift and the apostasy and the immorality, it's all just been accelerated by this, you know, worldwide culture we have on the internet. So that's how it seems to me. I just don't know. It's really hard to tell if you're living in some remote place in a rural area of this country 100 years ago or 200 years ago, if it was the same thing going on, it's just hard to tell, but it does seem that the appearances are it's just a rapid decline.

You asked about the connection to music and I think the adopting maybe some of the worldly forms of popular music and popular culture may be co-opting those and adapting those and bringing them into the church. I read a book some time ago called, *God's Forever Family*, that

traced kind of the start through the Calvary Chapel movement of the hippie culture getting into very conservative churches. And that happened when Chuck Smith brought Lonnie Frisbee. Lonnie Frisbee, it was proven over time that he was a homosexual or a struggling homosexual, but he was a radical preacher in that hippie form of Christianity. Enter Chuck Smith. Chuck Smith was a straight laced, black tie wearing preacher and he made a decision, Am I going to let the hippies in and their culture into the church and adapt the church to that culture along with all of its music, or am I going to require them to conform to the church's culture? He made the first decision. Chuck Smith brought Lonnie Frisbee and the hippies in and the hippie music, and that started the Calvary Chapel movement heading in that direction. That's what it's been known for is its music, its adaptation to the culture, and its way of innovating.

When Lonnie Frisbee became a bit too radical for Chuck Smith, he left the Calvary Chapel movement and joined John Wimber to start the Vineyard movement. Eventually, I think Lonnie Frisbee became too radical for John Wimber as well and left the Vineyard movement and did his own thing. But that Vineyard movement, just like the Calvary Chapel movement, both of them appropriating the culture, its musical forms, its beats, its rhythms, its style, and brought that into the church and churches have been aping the style of the world ever since.

Host: David Wheaton 27:24

It's very, very clear. And for those who say that this hasn't had a big impact on the evangelical church are just either in denial or not paying attention because it's completely taken over the evangelical movement. Any given Sunday, half of the service time is sort of like this really highly produced Christian rock concert I guess is the only way you can say it. And while the floodgates have already been wide open to this for years, I think it's very debatable whether the modern music methodology is actually honoring to God. We'll take a short break and be back with more with Travis Allen right after this.

Upcoming Event: TCW Golf Event 2022 30:31

David Wheaton here inviting you to The Christian Worldview golf event on Monday, September 19th at Woodhill Country Club in Wayzata, Minnesota. This is a rare opportunity to experience Woodhill with its immaculate condition, challenging greens and beautiful setting, all in support of The Christian Worldview Radio Ministry. Your Registration includes lunch on the lawn, practice range, player gift, and 18 holes with cart, followed by appetizers and awards. Make a hole in one on number 16, and you'll take home a brand new Chevy.

Bring your foursome or we can fit you into a group. There are lots of hole sponsor opportunities as well. We hope to see you on Monday, September 19th. The registration deadline is Labor Day. To find out more and to register, visit TheChristianWorldview.org or call 1-888-646-2233. That's 1-888-646-2233 or TheChristianWorldview.org.

Featured Resource: My Boy Ben 31:32

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Host: David Wheaton 32:37

Thanks for joining us today on The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton, the host. Just a reminder that today's program and past programs are archived at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. Transcripts and Short Takes are also available.

Now back to the interview with Pastor Travis Ellen. Now, going on to the third point of the drift, you talk about an ecclesiological drift that has to do with the church. And you say that evangelicals have forgotten what a church is, and what a church is for. Rather than an equipping church for God fearing Christians to give teaching, reproof, correction and training and righteousness, many evangelicals consider church as an event, now this is important, to attract unbelievers. Pastors and church staff serve the event that cater to the, "Consumers" to entertain, inspire, to motivate and to provide a kind of group therapy. Pastors are not shepherds. Andy Stanley, a very popular pastor down in Georgia believes that model as a pastor as a shepherd is outmoded. It needs to be replaced by the, "CEO model." The pastor is chief fundraiser, visionary, chief executive overseeing the program managers. Now just as an aside, this wasn't in your message, but I just got this online here from an interview that Andy Stanley did with the leadership journal. It's put out by Christianity Today, surprise surprise, that they published an interview with Andy Stanley called, "Get it done leadership.

The interviewer asked, What is distinctly spiritual about the kind of leadership you do? to Andy Stanley. His reply was candid. "There is nothing distinctly spiritual." Then he said this, "One of the criticisms I get is your church is so corporate. I read blogs all the time. Bloggers complain the pastor is like a CEO. And I say okay, you're right. Now why is that a bad model?" When his interviewer asked, Should we stop talking about pastors as shepherds? His response was brazen, "Absolutely. That word needs to go away. Jesus talked about shepherds because there was one over there in a pasture he could point to. But to bring in that imagery today and say, Pastor, you're the shepherd of the flock, No, I've never seen a flock. I've never spent five

minutes with a shepherd. It was culturally relevant in the time of Jesus, but it's not culturally relevant anymore. Nothing works in our culture with that model, except this sense of the gentle pastoral care. Obviously, that is a face of church ministry. But that's not leadership." And you finish by saying this, "The pastor, it is not about running an organization, you say, being a visionary or get it done leadership. I want to say this in no uncertain terms to forcefully and vehemently contradict Andy Stanley. The pastor, it is all about shepherding. So we better get that metaphor right." So Travis, how much has this taken root, the pastor as CEO instead of shepherd? And how can a church goer discern whether their pastors and elders are following the CEO model, or the shepherd model?

Guest: Travis Allen 36:11

Well, I think that that model, whether we call it the CEO model, a business model for the church, but there are other models as well. Visionary, therapist, life coach, conference speaker, there are all kinds of bad models for what spiritual church, pastoral leadership looks like. But really, the only model that the Bible prescribes, gives an example of from Old Testament to New Testament is a shepherd who is patterned after the good shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, you asked, How can church members know whether their pastor is following the Bible's Shepherd model or a different one? Go to Scripture. Jesus, Himself, the Good Shepherd said, "My sheep, know my voice, and they hear me and they follow Me." So if the more familiar a church member is, the more familiar a Christian is with the Lord Jesus Christ, with his voice, with his tone, with the way he treats them, with the way he speaks to them, which is not just a soft way of speaking, he says some very, very hard things. He makes demands on our stewardship of our time and our money. He has a lot to say about money and how we spend ourselves, how we invest ourselves or don't, for the kingdom. He has a lot to say about hell and judgments and condemnation.

So our Lord has a lot of strong things to say, as a shepherd. But he also is a shepherd who is gentle and meek. And he's soft with people. He's infinitely forgiving toward those who repent and come to Him in faith. So I think the more that a Christian can know the Bible, can know the Lord Jesus Christ and see him on the pages of Scripture and hear His voice, they're going to know, just instinctively, like a sheep knows his shepherd, they're going to know, is my pastor following the model of the Lord Jesus Christ, or something else.

Host: David Wheaton 38:23

And you can really tell by how much a pastor is engaged with the congregation. Just as a shepherd would be closely engaged with his sheep, he's around them a lot, they know him. And if that's not the scenario in your church, where you hardly even know your pastor, and you just hear him preach and that's really about it, same with the elders, then I don't think your church is following this biblical model of the shepherd needs to lead and love and be a part of the sheep.

Guest: Travis Allen 38:53

I agree. And I just add, David, that this is a concern I have among and I'll just say, there are conservative, faithful to the gospel preachers that I've heard and seen, even some men that I really love and admire and respect, but they really are in their own personal ministry. They act more like conference speakers going from event to event. And they relish the preaching gift, and I love their preaching gift, but they are not planted in a local church situation. Their ministry is more for the big screen or for the podcast or for the event. It's less about being involved in people's lives. And that is not the model that we're to follow. I see this in conservative circles as well. I see it in my own camp.

I think our models, we need to be very careful who we're following and realize these pastors who are faithful are not known and they are so faithful to their congregations. They're known. Their behaviors, their mannerisms. That pastor is to live in a fishbowl and to have your life examined by your church and to be accountable to them, to be accountable to your elders and deacons. It's a life of accountability and a life of scrutiny. But it's a blessed position to be in because through that scrutiny and through that fishbowl, you press on, you're pressed toward greater holiness, for the sake of the glory of God and His gospel, to have credibility before the people, to have their trust so that they can hear the voice of the Shepherd through you.

Host: David Wheaton 40:34

I'm so glad you emphasized that Travis. That's really an important thing you just talked about. And I like the way you even talked about those who are in your own theological camp. We all need to examine ourselves. The local church is where we are to be, and not just kind of out there on a speaking circuit and not just looking for people to preach to but to be invested into their lives. Travis Allen with us today here on The Christian Worldview. Our topic is the need for evangelical repentance and reformation. The topic is based on a two part sermon series that Travis did at a reforming evangelical conference at his church, Christ Church in Greeley, Colorado in September of 2021. We have both of these messages linked at our website, The ChristianWorldview.org And you're just highly encouraged to listen to them.

Let's go on to the fourth part of the drift. You said the ecclesiological drift has been caused, you just talked about, in large part by number four, the institutional drift. The institution Jesus Christ ordained is the Christian church. But after World War II, the parachurch or parachurch organizations begin to set the agenda for the churches. I remember, Travis, a couple years ago you were on the program talking about the parachurch. So here it comes up again. And *Evangelicalism Divided*, that's the name of a book by Iain Murray, he draws attention to the influence of one man, Billy Graham. Murray writes, "One of Graham's most frequently repeated sayings from the year 1957 onwards was, "The one badge of Christian discipleship is not orthodoxy, not doctrinal, he says, but love." You say in your message, To recruit the necessary

workforce to promote and execute his massive evangelistic crusades, Billy Graham needed the cooperation and participation of churches from a wide range of denominations. He pursued an ecumenical strategy, mainly for pragmatic reasons to be able to put on these huge crusades. Who could argue with Graham's numerical success? He packed stadiums by the 10s of 1000s and became the handsome face of the success of the new evangelicalism. Surrounded by scholars, Graham set the tone for future Christian institutions, household names, now listen to these institutions that Billy Graham either started or led or impacted. Wheaton College, Fuller Seminary, Christianity Today, Decision magazine, Youth for Christ, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Urbana student missions conferences, World Congress on Evangelism, the Lausanne Movement and Bible Study Fellowship.

Those institutions, not churches, but parachurch institutions have trained Christian laity, and especially the young people. They left the environment of the local church, preferring instead the exciting institutions of this new evangelicalism in the para church. They imbibed a spirit of revivalism and ecumenism, doctrinally Arminian and pragmatic, measuring success by counting nickels and noses. They embraced Billy Graham's ecumenism with an aversion to doctrine. Since doctrine divides, many who rose to leadership in the parachurch institutions, not ordained, not theologically trained, not biblically qualified for eldership in the local church, nonetheless, they influence local churches to be suspicious of doctrine, resulting in theological anemia, opting instead for producing concert or conference like experiences for Sunday visitors. Isn't that the truth today. In the visible evangelical world, the parachurch has prevailed over the church. That's a big statement and a sad statement. The mistress has supplanted the Bride of Christ.

The evidence you say, the most popular well recognized form of visible evangelical Christianity today is represented by the mega church. Now Travis, I gotta say here, this was a really strong part of your message to be kind of pointing the finger at who Billy Graham was and how he did his ministry and what that resulted in, really the growth and the explosion of the parachurch. I mean, people listening today might say, well, 10s, or 100s of 1000s of people profess to come to saving faith in Christ through Billy Graham crusades. Many people know someone who went to a Billy Graham crusade and that's where their salvation started they will profess. They walked an aisle as, *Just As I Am*, was sung by George Beverly Shea. So as you look back over this era in America, it was a very popular time for evangelicalism in this country, What should we think about Billy Graham and the course of his ministry now?

Guest: Travis Allen 45:56

David, you're drawing the bead on some important questions. And I want to say a couple of things about that. Number one, anything that I have to say in criticism or concern about Billy Graham and his ministry, was written better and said better by men like Iain Murray, and George Marston in books that they've written about that entire era. So I want to point people to,

Evangelicalism Divided by Iain Murray and *Reforming Fundamentalism* by George Marsden. If they do just those two books, and then they can follow the footnotes to other books as well, but if they read those two books, I think that they'll see that the case that's made there is kind of beyond dispute. And so let me point to better men than myself who've said it better and with better research. But going to the hundreds of 1000s, and we might even say the millions who have claimed to put their faith in Jesus Christ through Billy Graham's ministry, I just have to say that we would expect if hundreds of 1000s or millions of people have become Christians through Billy Graham's ministry, why does our country look like it looks? Why does the United States, why is it in such a moral, not just decline, but why is it plummeting to the cesspool of the LGBTQ movement? Social justice? Why is the influence of millions of people who become Christians, why is it so powerless in the culture? I just have to question and we see evidence of this all through Scripture.

Just because someone professes to be a Christian, doesn't mean that they necessarily are. The Scripture attests to that over and over. Israel claimed to be God's people and yet they were a moral cesspool. Judah followed suit. Same thing in the New Testament, we see Jesus concern in the parable of the soils, three of the four soils don't produce any fruit. And so it is the case in Scripture that time and truth go hand in hand, and we have to wait and see over time, what fruit is produced. Jesus said, you'll know them by their fruits. And if we look at the fruits of Billy Graham's ministry, and we look at the fruits and its effects on the church, and the effects in the parachurch and the effects on the culture in general in our country, I have to say that the fruits, they lead us to believe that it was a bad route.

Host: David Wheaton 48:29

That's really something to think about. Thank you for including that because no one is above being examined and what their ministry is like and the ministry of ecumenism never ends well. It always dissipates sound doctrine. And, you know, what is it produced today? You know, many years later now.

Travis Allen with us today here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. Okay, that's all we have time for today. But we do have one more segment for next week with Pastor Travis Allen that we encourage you to listen to. If you missed any of the interview today or the interview with him last week, you can go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org and hear both of these last two programs. Also, when you're there, click on the link to The Reforming Evangelicalism Conference where pastor Travis Allen delivered two messages, The Need for Evangelical Reformation, which is really the topic we discussed today, and the second message was Reforming the Evangelical Pastor. Those are both linked at our website, [The ChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org). This year's conference at his church is titled, The Science and the Circus Conference, where Jeff Williams and Justin Peters and Travis will be preaching. That's

on September 23rd to the 25th. Again, you can find out more by going to gracegreely.org. You can attend in person or watch online. N

ow just a couple of follow up comments on the conversation with Travis today. I thought it was very interesting what he said about evangelicalism being formed to find a, "Middle way or a third way between liberalism on one side and fundamentalism on the other." The evangelicals didn't want to appear pugnacious, he said. That really does explain everything. We see today how this third way or middle way has turned out, whether on creation, you have organizations like BioLogos, who merge God and evolution, just a total compromise. Even abortion. That you're not really pro life unless you're also against capital punishment and for government control of universal health care for all.

Another issue of male and female roles. You see, now it's becoming much more popular within evangelicalism for women to be preaching to men in churches. Sexuality, the idea of you can be a gay Christian. And of course, race. The whole rise of the social justice issue. This is all an attempt to find a third way between what the Bible says, compromising that, because of the pressure from the outside culture.

And finally, what he said about Billy Graham, the most popular evangelical of the 20th century. Of course, Billy Graham did and said many correct and positive things, especially earlier in his ministry. People were saved through his preaching. And yet, he's not beyond critique like any other Christian leader, because he led and influenced evangelicalism to where it is today. Anytime you put someone beyond critique, then you start excusing error and compromise. Popularity is not the measure of a man or a ministry, whether book sales or church numbers or attendance at events or the number of salvation professions. Faithfulness to God and His Word is.

So let's be razor focused on being faithful to God and His Word. Let's accurately handle the word of truth, being full of truth, but also of grace, and trusting God for the fruit. And yet to accurately handle the Word of truth, you must have the Spirit of truth inside of you, helping you understand and apply the Word. And that comes when you repent of your sin, and put your faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ on the cross on your behalf. To find out more, visit TheChristianWorldview.org and click on the page, What must I do to be saved? Thank you for joining us today in The Christian Worldview. In just a moment, there will be all kinds of information on this nonprofit radio ministry. Be encouraged. We may be living in a world of evangelical compromise in need of repentance and reformation, but let's go back to the foundation. Jesus Christ and His word are the same yesterday, today and forever. Until next time, "Think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm!"

The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript or find out, "What must I do to be saved?" Go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener supported nonprofit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation. To make a donation, become a Christian Worldview Partner, order resources, subscribe to our free newsletter or contact us, visit TheChristianWorldview.org call 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. That's Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. Thanks for listening to The Christian Worldview.