

WBNP #29 - Our Next Evangelist?

Good Evening. A Puritan's Mind brings you the old time radio program *The Wild Boar News Podcast* from Sunny South Florida. Welcome, I'm Dr. Matthew McMahon.

Evangelists. Are they for today? The Reformation and Puritanism were in agreement that Evangelists were an office specific to the time of the early church during the Apostolic Era. They agree that the properties of that office were tied to things that not only included the regular preaching of the word, but also extraordinary gifts that were also tied to the Apostolic era now ceased. As Dr. John Owen a prince among puritans, rightly says of Evangelists, "The evangelists we read of had extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, without which they could not warrantably undertake their office. That there is no need of their continuance from any work applied unto them."

Does the contemporary church agree?

In Newsmax magazine, the December 2006 issue, beginning on page 54, columnist Dave Eberhart asks the question, who is "Our Next Great Evangelist." As we so hoped that Billy Graham would not only step down, but that his theology would lose its heat as well, no, the devil won't have that. His son, Franklin Graham is going to take up an iconic center of stage following in the footsteps of his misguided father.

The title of the article is "Franklin Graham Takes the Stage." I agree. Franklin Graham is taking the stage. He is not entering the office of an evangelist, nor of the office of minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He is, with many other iconic religion people, taking up the spotlight on the stage. Who are these others that he will now share in the spotlight? Eberhart makes list and comments on religious figures such as Pope Benedict 16th, Jerry Falwell, John Hagee, Jack Hayford, Benny Hinn, TD Jakes, Joyce Meyer, Kirk Cameron, Bob Coy, Joel Osteen, Luis Palau, Pat Robertson, Tony Evans, Ted Haggard, and Rick Warren. Need I go on? Graham, the dispensational Arminian, who is rescuing Pelagianism from the depth of hell, is rubbing shoulders and borrowing limelight time from heretics of all kinds. Anti-Trinitarians, Modalists,

Charismanics, Pelagians, and motivational speakers with New Age advice. And these, yes, are the icons of the American Church.

But in a much somber light, the Bible speaks about deceivers who will come in the last days, and deceive many. The people of God, during these last days, stretching from the time of the early church even until now, have seen the ebb and flow of demonic doctrines and things taught by devils sweeping into the church, changing her Gospel, changing her worship, and changing the very essence of theological doctrine surrounding the being of the One True God, Jesus Christ.

No, Franklin Graham is not an evangelist, as much as one might say Benny Hinn or Joel Osteen are Christians. Rather, the history of American Enlightenment has followed the pleas of one Charles Finney, of which much of these people have bought their theology, even without knowing it. The old saw dust trail, and the seat of decision, turned Charles Finney, an avowed Pelagian, to be deemed one of the great evangelists of the religious community in the 19th century. So that kind of open air preaching (but preaching of another sort) has labeled such men evangelists.

Enter, the Bible. The Bible teaches, as in Jeremiah 3:14-17 "Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. 15 "And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. 16 "Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days," says the LORD, "that they will say no more, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore. 17 "At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts." Shepherds, in contrast to false teachers, explain God's mind to the people.

Let me give you 10 chief heresies:

1) The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament do not bind us Christians.

- 2) That God never loved one man more than another before the world, and that all the decrees are conditional.
- 3) That there is no original sin.
- 4) That the will of man is still free.
- 5) That the saints may fall totally and finally from grace.
- 6) That Christ died alike for all, yea, that his salvific virtue of His death extends to all the reprobates as well as the elect, yea, to the very devils as well as unto men.
- 7) That Jesus Christ came into the world not for satisfaction, but for publication; not to procure for us and to us the love of God, but only to be a glorious Publisher of the Gospel.
- 8) That God is not displeased at all if His children sin.
- 9) That the doctrine of repentance is a soul destroying doctrine.
- 10) That the souls of men are not immortal but mortal.

These could be taken from the sermons of any of those described before in part, if not in full. Be advised. They were taken from "The Nature and Danger of Heresies" by Obadiah Sedgwick in the 17th century. Surely, there is nothing new under the sun.

The Apostolic church would never have put up with "evangelists" preaching heresy. Their extraordinary office gave way to the ordinary office of elders and deacons, which now the true church of Jesus Christ thrives under when the true Gospel is preached. No, we don't have any more evangelists, and Franklin Graham is not the church's next. Rather, we ought to listen to the God-given elders that preach day in and day out in those churches established by the Authority of Jesus Christ as His ambassadors to the world. Graham, Osteen, Warren, Coy and others can have the limelight. God's people prefer the pulpit.

This is Dr. Matthew McMahon signing off.