

Fire In My Bones

Don't Get Brainwashed!

In January I spent four days preaching at Emmanuel College, a Christian liberal arts school in Georgia. I love speaking to college students because they are spiritually hungry, they love passionate worship, and I can preach in jeans without offending anyone.

On the third night (after a young man got saved and delivered from drug addiction—*yeah God!*) I told the kids I needed to get brutally honest. They gave me permission to shoot straight. Because I genuinely care about them, I warned them about four lies they must confront.

Every Christian in this country must learn to dissect these lies using the Word of God. The devil is working overtime today to gain control of our nation's soul. This is not a time for Christians to be squishy in their faith or spineless in their convictions. We must plant our feet on the bedrock principles of the Bible and oppose each of these lies:

1. Hell does not exist. Jesus preached about hell more than anyone in the Bible. His words dripped with love, but He didn't soft-pedal when addressing the eternal consequences of sin. The true gospel is a double-edged sword that offers both the "goodness *and* severity of God" (Rom. 11:22, emphasis added). That's why hell is one four-letter word we should use more often—not to condemn people but to warn them that mercy has a time limit.

The world rejects the concept of hell because it's too exclusive. Our Oprah-ized culture insists that everyone deserves a warm and fuzzy life free of consequences. But if we truly love people we will explain that hell is not a metaphor—it is a real place of dreadful separation from God that sinners choose when they reject Him.

2. God didn't create the world. 2009 is the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, so you can be sure the scientific community will bombard us this year with more "proof" of this sketchy theory. The mainstream media and academia insist that evolution is pure fact. Anyone who dares to challenge it is considered a religious idiot.

The world does not want to believe in a Creator because if He is real, then He has ultimate authority over His creation. On the flip side, man has no moral responsibility if he crawled out of a primordial soup, grew fins, then legs, and then became a talking ape. Evolution is not really about science at all—it is about rebellion against God's rule over us.

3. All religions lead to God. This isn't a new lie, but it is enjoying a revival today. The doctrine of universalism—which states that all people will ultimately gain salvation and enjoy heaven—has become the religion of the masses.

Even some charismatic and Pentecostal preachers such as Carlton Pearson of Oklahoma and D.E. Paulk of Atlanta have abandoned biblical orthodoxy to embrace this heresy. They are now on a crusade to rewrite Christian theology—and they have allies in some mainline denominations (such as the Episcopal Church) where the authority of Scripture is denied.

Christians who embrace universalism are like the neutered prophets of Baal in Jezebel's court. They preach a powerless message that can't change anyone. We must arise in the spirit of Elijah to prove to the world that the one true God answers by fire.

4. Man can redefine morality. Leaders in media, politics, education and entertainment are plotting the overthrow of conventional morals. They want a hedonistic world with no rules and no guilt. This was most obvious when *Newsweek* published a recent cover story brazenly claiming that the

Bible approves of same-sex marriage.

A lying spirit has invaded many mainline churches and is convincing weak Christians to change their views about homosexuality, abortion and fornication. Evil is called good while those who stand for the biblical values of purity and traditional marriage are labeled bigots. If we ignore these lies they will engulf us.

We cannot be silent on the issues the devil is attacking. If you are wavering in your faith on any of these four fundamentals, get honest about your doubts, repent of your lukewarmness and get your mind renewed. Don't become a brainwash victim.

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